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THE

New Godiva!

COMEDY-DRAMA IN FOUR ACTS,

BY

WALDORF H. PHILLIPS.

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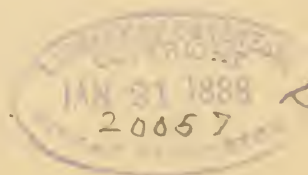
COMEDY-DRAMA IN FOUR ACTS,

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CHARACTERS REPRESENTED.

—O—

LADY DEVERELL, afterwards MRS. MORLEY, .
MISS ANASTASIA ANTIQUE, a giddy maiden of uncertain
age but certain purpose,
BLANCHE SOMERS, a "Ward of Chancery,"
SUSAN, one of a great City's "White Slaves,"
SIR ARTHUR DEVERELL, "the curse of pride was his,"
MR. BULFINCH, Solicitor,
VAL POINDESTRE, in love with Blanche,
HENRY ALBERT, "old boy," "the certain purpose" of
Miss Antique,
SILAS HERBERT, the Artist of "The New Godiva," .
SIR JOHN BOLT, Admiral in "Her Majesty's Navy" .
DOCTOR HUME, learned and human,
TOM, Sir Arthur's Valet, privileged to say what he pleases.
DETECTIVE.

TIME;—The Present Decade.

SCENE;—England.

SYNOPSIS.

ACT I.—At "Norton Towers," the home of the Deverells. *Ruined!*

ACT II.—Room in a London Lodging House. *The Sacrifice.*

ACT III.—(Six months later.) Drawing Room at Miss Antique's.

First Tableau.—The Picture of a Sacrifice!

Second Tableau.—The Reward of a Sacrifice!

(SPECIAL NOTICE,—The Curtain will be lowered upon the First Tableau for *one minute* only. The audience is earnestly requested to remain seated.)

ACT IV.—(One year later.) At Chiswick Villa, Lady Deverell's home. *Forgiven.*

PROPERTIES.

ACT I.—Billiard Cues, etc, Music Portfolio on Piano, Fan for Miss Antique, Segars and Matches for Sir Arthur, Newspaper on Table, Hat for Bulfinch, Segars and Matches for Bulfinch, A Legal Document for Bulfinch, Whip for Lady Deverell.

ACT II.—Glasses and Dishes on Cupboard, Tray of dishes and food on it for Susan, A Purse for Mrs. Morley, Handsome Boquet in a tumbler of water for Tom, Pen and Ink on Cupboard, Prescription Pad for Dr. Hume, Apron for Susan to wear, A Saucer and Egg for Susan, Duster on Cupboard.

ACT III.—Painting of "The New Godiva" on large Easel, A Newspaper on Lounge, Snuff-box for Bulfinch, Note Book for Bulfinch.

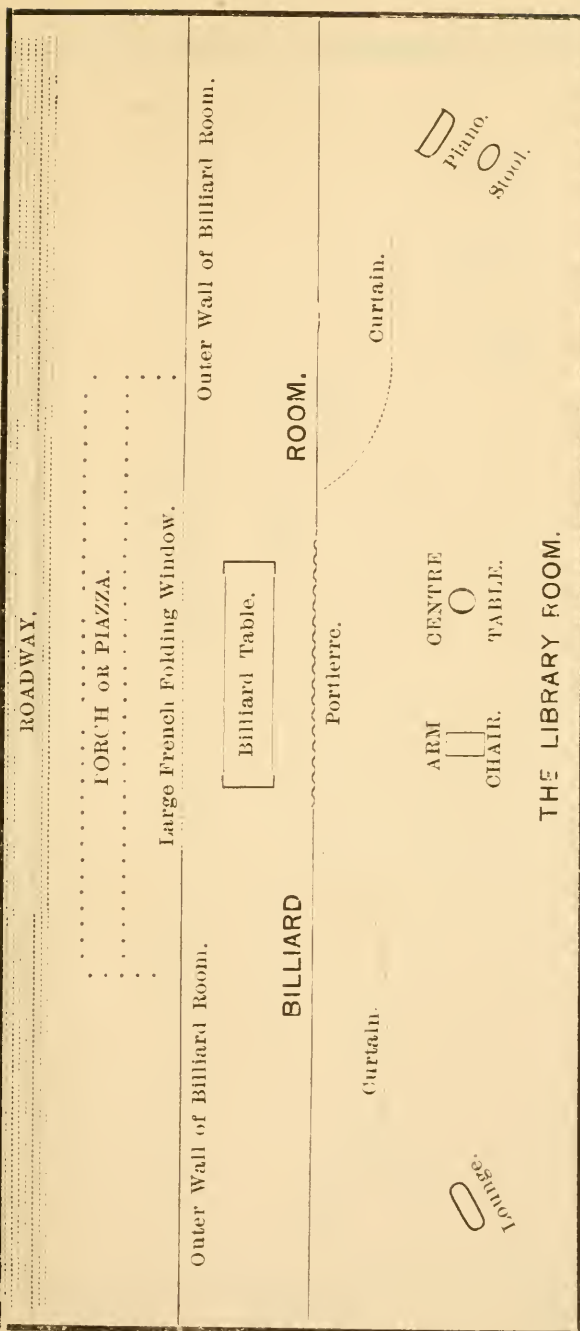
ACT IV.—Writing Materials on Table, A small bottle or Vial for Albert, A Legal Document for Val., Badge for Detective.



SCENE PLOT.

ACT I.

BACK DROP, REPRESENTING GROUNDS AND TERRACE.



THE LIBRARY ROOM.

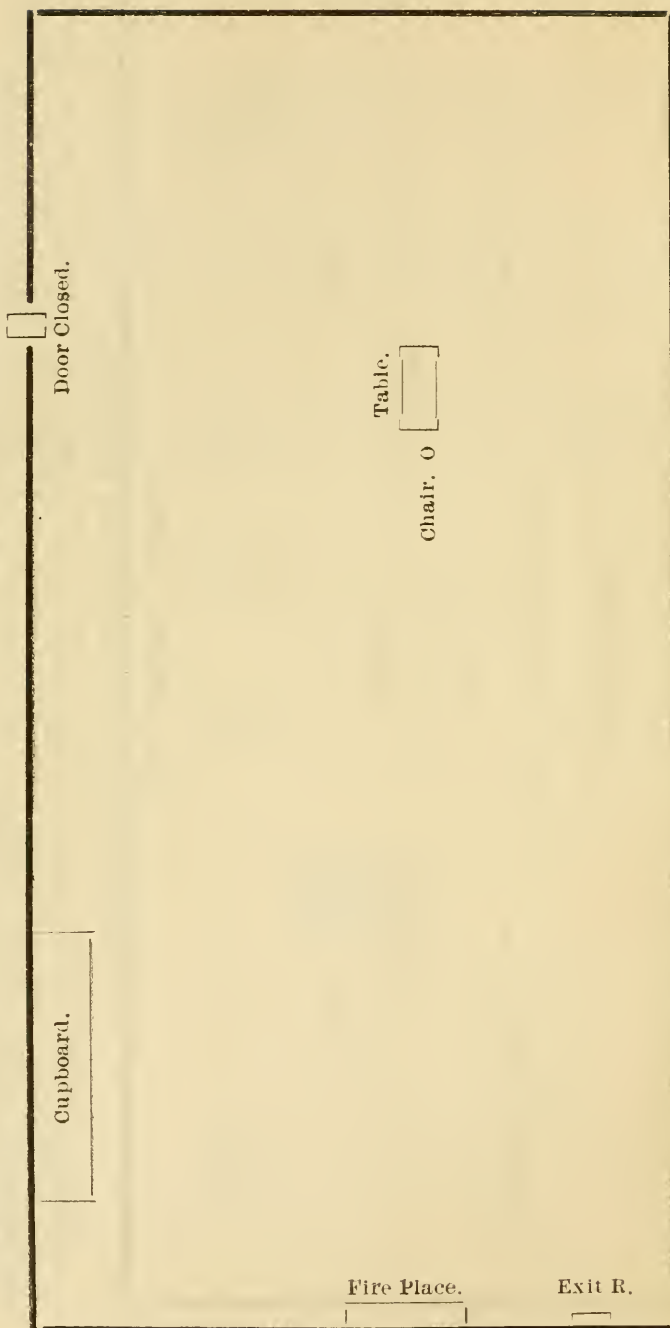
THE ROOMS SHOULD BE HANDSOMELY FURNISHED.

The Library at Norton Towers, opening into Billiard Room, which is separated from it by a Portierre, the Curtains of which are drawn wide open. Large French Folding Windows at back, opening upon a Porch. Through these windows is seen the Terrace and Grounds of Norton Towers, and Roadway leading to the house. The Library and Billiard Room are handsomely furnished. Piano L, half-way up Stage. Large Arm Chair C, by a Center Table. A three-quarter Lounge down stage R. Billiard Table, etc., in Billiard Room. Pictures, Statuary, Chairs, etc.

THE NEW GODIVA.

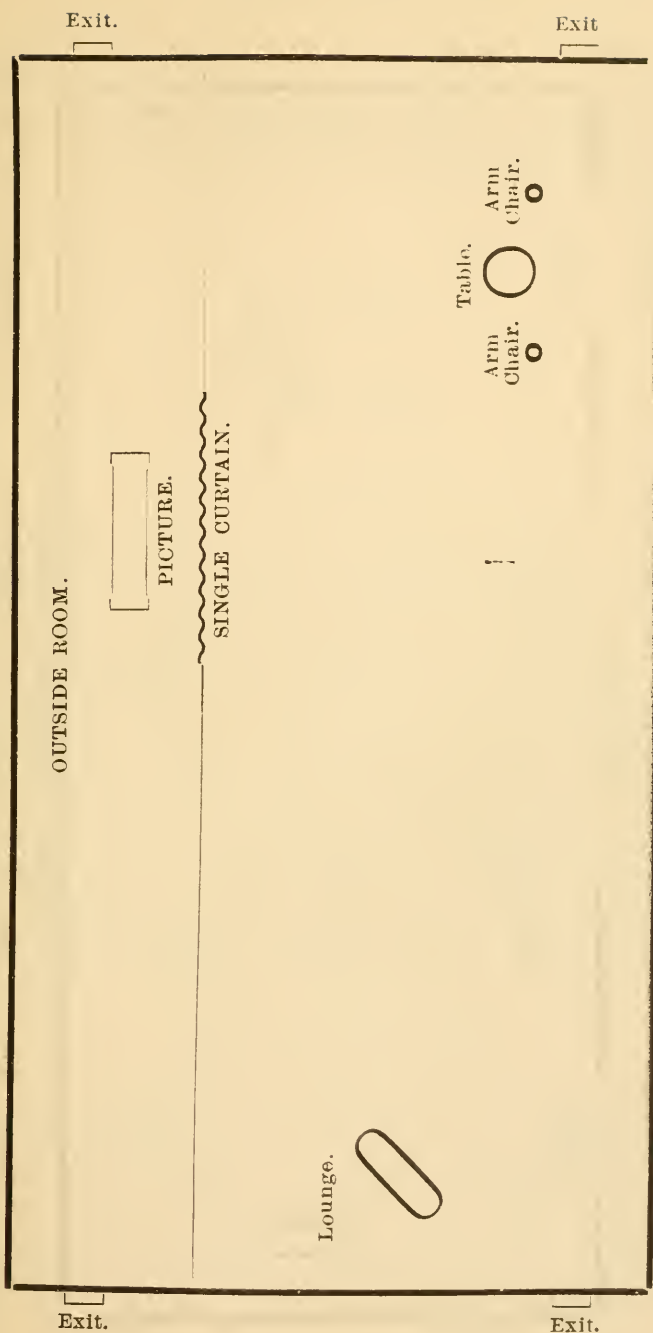
ACT II.

FLAT REPRESENTING WALL OF A ROOM. IS SEEN ONLY WHEN DOOR OF FRONT ROOM IS OPENED.



A Room in a London Cheap Lodging-house. It is very barely furnished, evidencing great poverty. A door, practical, L. C. back, apparently opening into another Room. Table C. A small Fire-place up Stage R. Fire in it. A couple of Chairs in the Room. Small Cupboard R. against back of scene. Some glasses and dishes upon it. Also Pen and Ink.

ACT III.

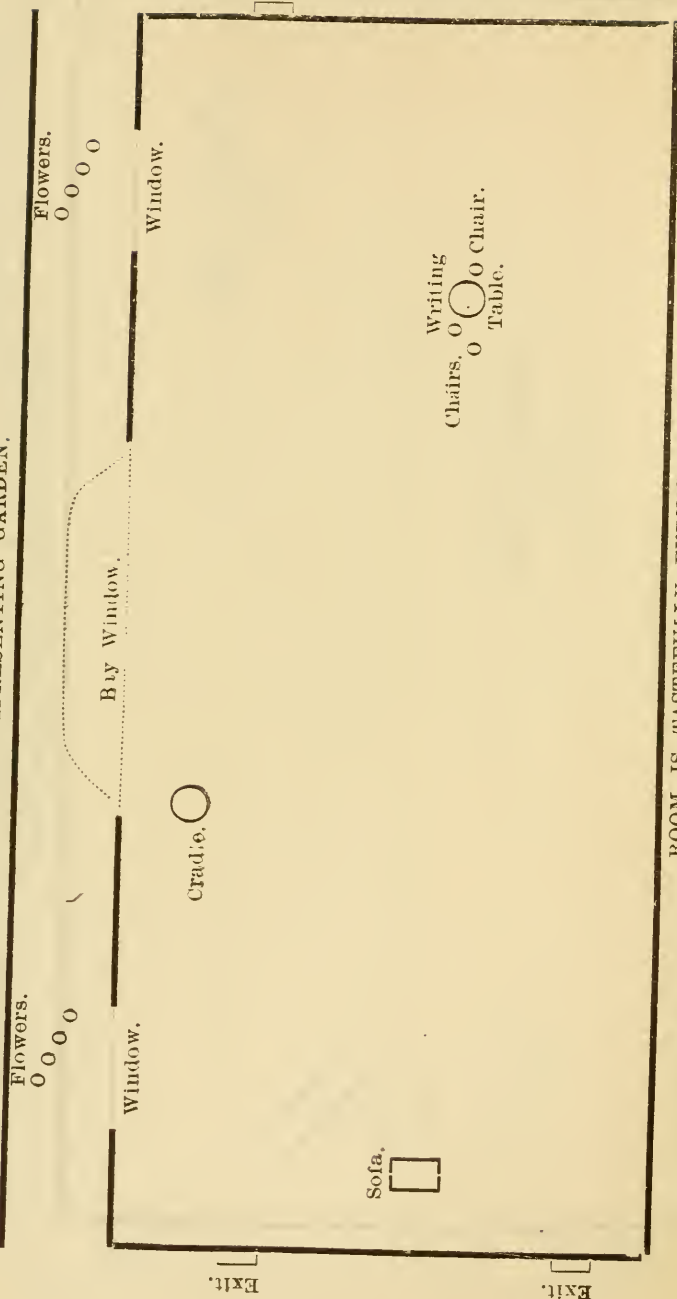


FRONT ROOM IS HANDSOMELY FURNISHED.

Drawing Room at Miss Antique's handsomely furnished. At back C. is a heavy Red Curtain in one piece on Rings, so as to be easily and quickly drawn back. Behind this Curtain on a large Easel is the picture of "The New Godiva," the Curtain when drawn open, disclosing the outer room. Lounge. R. Small Table L. C. Arm Chairs on both sides of it. A newspaper on the Lounge.

ACT IV.

DROP REPRESENTING GARDEN.



ROOM IS TASTEFULLY FURNISHED.

Drawing Room at Chiswick Villa, tastefully furnished. Windows R. and L. and large Bay Window C., through which the Garden is seen. A cradle with Infants in it near the Bay Window. Sofa up stage R. Handsome Writing Table, with two chairs on R. and one on L. side of it, half-way up Stage L. Writing Materials upon it.

THE NEW GODIVA!

ACT I.

RUINED!

SCENE:

The Library at "Norton Towers" opening into Billiard Room which is separated from it by a Portierre, the Curtains of which are drawn wide open—Large French folding Windows at back opening on a Porch. Through these windows is seen the Terrace and grounds of Norton Towers and Roadway leading to the house—The Library and Billiard Room are handsomely furnished—Piano L. half-way up Stage—Large Arm Chair C. by a Center Table—A $\frac{3}{4}$ Lounge down Stage R.—Billiard Table, etc., in Billiard Room—Pictures, Statuary, Chairs, etc.

At the rise of Curtain Sir Arthur Deverell and Sir John Bolt discovered playing Billiards—Miss Antique (an "Old Maid" dressed like and aping the manners of "Sweet Sixteen,") sitting on Lounge.—Henry Albert, a middle-aged Bachelor, stands near her—Blanche Somers is at the Piano, Val Poindestre bending over her. They are turning over the leaves of a Music Portfolio—Miss Antique toys with a Fan.

MUSIC AS CURTAIN RISES.

MISS AN. As my poor, dear Mamma used to say, what tender thoughts such weather as this inspires. Come sit down here by my side, wont you, Mr. Albert? (*He does so.*) So your Sister is engaged?

ALBERT. Yes,—to Lord Fitzgerald. Know Lord Fitzgerald? No? Well, you ought to. Gave her a dress,—beautiful White Satin trimmed down the front with rubies and with diamonds for buttons behind! Fact!

MISS AN. How beautiful ! How nice it must be to be engaged !

ALBERT. From my observation I should say it is frequently much better than being married, old girl.

MISS AN. Please dont call me old girl.

ALBERT. Cant help it—habit I have,—dont mean anything.

MISS AN. But I dont like it. Julia—you can call me Julia !

ALBERT. Eh ?

MISS AN. I said you could call me Julia.

ALBERT. (*moving away.*) Oh,—can I ?

MISS AN. (*drawing close to him.*) Yes,—Henry, dear !

ALBERT. (*aside—edging to end of lounge.*) Henry dear ! The old girl's coming it strong. What's she up to ?

MISS AN. (*After moving so close as to almost tumble him off the lounge, than catching him as he is about to tumble and drawing him back.*) Did you ever have a tender attachment, Henry ? It must be a terrible thing to break a tender attachment.

ALBERT. I should say so, old girl,—often causes a Railway accident !

MISS AN. (*moving closer.*) I dont mean that. I—I—I mean—love !

ALBERT. (*trying to get away.*) Gracious !

MISS AN. (*drawing him back.*) Why, why dont you get a sweet-heart for yourself ? I'm sure some little girl loves you.

ALBERT. Ye—Oh, yes ! All love me—cant help it, you know. Trouble is I love all of them !

MISS AN. And I'm sure you are old enough to marry ! (*Giggles over Fan.*)

ALBERT. Ye—yes ; I've cut my eye teeth !

MISS AN. (*grasping his arm suddenly.*) And so—so have I ! (*Covers her face with Fan.*)

ALBERT. (*aside.*) She's coming it too heavy ! She's after me !

SIR ARTHUR (*making a shot.*) That's a bad miss. I deserve to lose the game for that.

SIR JOHN. (*shooting and missing.*) Ha, ha ! That isn't much better.

MISS AN. Think what it is to have a dear, dear wife !

ALBERT. (*aside.*) She might be too confounded dear !

MISS AN. How pleasant it would be to come home and find a loving woman's heart waiting for you to smooth away your cares and—and kiss you !

ALBERT. (*attempting to rise.*) Excuse me,—we'll continue this some other time.

MISS AN. (*pulling him back.*) Dont go, Henry.—Henry dear ! (*Leans her head on his shoulder.*)

ALBERT. (*aside.*) Confound it! she's getting powder all over my coat. I'm perspiring from head to foot!

MISS AN. Ah what it is to possess such a love! See how happy Sir Arthur and Lady Deverell are. My poor, dear Mamma used to describe to me the kind of man she'd liked to have seen my husband.

ALBERT. (*aside.*) Hem! this will let me out. (*aloud.*) Yes? What was he like?

MISS AN. (*hiding her face on his bosom.*) Just I like you!

ALBERT. (*aside.*) Hang it! she's getting worse and worse!

BLANCHE. (*to Val.*) Just see those two! I shall certainly laugh outright in a minute.

VAL. I must rescue the poor old chap. The giddy girl's making a dead break for him.

BLANCHE. Don't interfere; you'll spoil the fun.

MISS AN. Oh, how happy I feel!

ALBERT. (*aside.*) I don't! I must change the subject somehow. (*aloud.*) Oh-ah, what a pretty dress you have on, old girl. (*Feeling it.*) Must be very expensive goods.

MISS AN. Would you really like to know what it cost?

ALBERT. (*aside.*) What in thunder is she up to now?

MISS AN. (*significantly.*) You know there's a way to inspect my bills!

ALBERT. (*starting.*) Oh,-ah,-yes! (*aside.*) Put my foot in it again!

MISS AN. (*suddenly.*) Henry! don't you—don't you do it!

ALBERT. (*desperately.*) See here, old girl, I don't understand you!

MISS AN. You naughty man! don't try to kiss me yet!

ALBERT. (*trying to get away.*) I'm not doing anything of the kind, old girl!

MISS AN. Well, you may,—just one, though. I'll close my eyes! (*Closes her eyes and holds up her mouth.*)

VAL. I must rescue him! (*Comes down to them while Blanche strikes a chord loudly on Piano.*) Oh, Mr. Albert,—I beg your pardon; I hope I'm not intruding.

ALBERT. (*jumping up and grasping his hand while Miss Antique resumes a formal attitude.*) Not at all, not at all, old boy! We were just talking about you!

BLANCHE. (*coming down--laughing.*) And we were just talking about you! Its ver. funny,—ha, ha, ha!

MISS AN. (*rising-indignantly.*) Excuse me; I don't see anything funny in it! (*Flounces out R.; they laugh.*)

ALBERT. (*to Val.*) Awfully obliged to you, old boy! Whenever you

see the old girl and I alone, come to my rescue, will you? If you dont or somebody dont, one of these days before I know it I'll be a goner!

BLANCHE. For shame, Mr. Albert, to run away from true love so. (*Goes back to Piano and plays softly.*)

VAL. I'll try to oblige you but I cant always be around.

ALBERT. Hem! that's a hint I'm not wanted. (*Nods significantly towards Blanche.*) All right, old boy; one good turn deserves another. I'll go smoke. (*Strolls into Billiard Room, stops to look at game a minute, then exits through Porch.*)

VAL. (*going to Blanche, turning Piano Stool around so that she faces audience, and standing by her, his back to Piano.*) Blanche, do you know what is the difference between those two and ourselves?

BLANCHE. Well really, you are very flattering! You'll be comparing me to Meg Merriles next, I suppose.

VAL. Oh, a truce to your perpetual bantering. Can't you be serious a moment?

BLANCHE. I don't know, -I can try. And, pray, what is the difference?

VAL. (*taking her hand.*) She wants to marry him and *he* wont consent; I want to marry you and *you* wont consent.

BLANCHE (*rising, laughing and crossing to Lounge.*) Oh, there wouldn't be any use in my consenting.

VAL. (*crossing to her.*) And why not?

BLANCHE. Because you must ask the Lord Chancellor,—I'm a Ward of Chancery.

VAL. (*sitting by her.*) That makes no difference.

BLANCHE. Oh dont it, though! Let me tell you that the Lord Chancellor is very particular. And perhaps you may have painted a portrait—one of your real bad portraits!—of him some time or other, and that—that would be fatal!

VAL. Oh, thank you. I thought you said you'd try to be serious for a minute.

BLANCHE. Well, I am. I like you very much indeed,—there! I haven't said anything like that before and I'm blushing fearfully, I know! But the Lord Chancellor isn't any joke! (*placing her hand on his knee and looking up at him.*) I've seen him!

VAL. (*placing arm around her waist.*) Indeed! Were you greatly frightened?

BLANCHE. Scared to death when I first went in; but I was so disappointed! (*Leans her head on his shoulder.*) I thought he always sat on a woolsack and wore a big ugly wig; but he was in a plain chair

and his head was bald and he didn't look particularly different from any other man!

VAL. That is very strange! Did he bite?

BLANCHE. No; but he could have sent me to prison if he had liked.

VAL. (*drawing her closer.*) Oh, indeed!

BLANCHE. Yes indeed! You needn't make fun of him either. They tell me he has the right if any one marries me without his consent, to transport him!

VAL. I should certainly be transported if I married you; so I'll risk your terrible Lord Chancellor.

BLANCHE. What pretty things you can say. If you flatter the Lord Chancellor as you do me, he'll certainly consent.

VAL. May I try?

BLANCHE. Yes, — if you'll risk transportation. (*He kisses her.*)

SIR ARTHUR. (*making a carom.*) Game! (*A horse head approaching.*) Ah! here comes Lady Deverell!

BLANCHE. (*disengaging herself and jumping up.*) Good gracious, Val! let me go! (*Rushes over to Piano, he following, and pretends playing.*)

Enter LADY DEVERELL on horseback. SIR ARTHUR goes out on Porch and helps her dismount. Groom leads off horse. She greets SIR JOHN and comes down front. They all surround her.

BLANCHE. My dear Kate, where have you been all morning?

LADY D. I've been looking over Mr. Nugent's stud which Sir Arthur has just bought. They are a magnificent lot of animals.

SIR JOHN. (*aside.*) Another piece of extravagance. Where will it end? (*Sits himself on Piano Stool.*)

SIR ARTHUR. I am glad you are pleased with my purchase.

BLANCHE. Was there ever a woman so fond of horses as you are?

LADY D. (*with a little laugh.*) Really, I am afraid not, — unless it is you.

VAL. There certainly never was one who sat a saddle with diviner grace.

LADY D. Flatterer!

BLANCHE. He's practicing for an attack on the Lord Chancellor. But you really are a Lady Gay Spanker in your love for horses and hunting.

LADY D. Perhaps; I know I often feel like repeating what Lady Gay says: "Give me the trumpet — neigh, the spotted pack just catching scent. What a chorus is their yelp! The view — hallo blent with a peal of free and fearless mirth. Time then appears as young as love and

plumes as swift a wing. Away we go! The earth flies back to aid our course! Horse, man, hound, earth, heaven,—all—all—one piece of glowing ecstasy! Then I love the world, myself, and every living thing. My soul cries out for very glee as it could wish that all creation had but one mouth that I might kiss it!"

SIR ARTHUR. Only I'm not Spanker, and I should object to your kissing all creation. But I've a proposition to make. What do you say to a ride to Denham Chase and back? The Autumn foliage is in its splendor now.

LADY D. Do you mean to-day, Arthur?

SIR ARTHUR. Yes—at once, if ever, body will approve. Those who like to ride can have a mount, and those who prefer driving can take the wagonette. You'll join, Sir John?

SIR JOHN. No, thank you. I prefer to stay here. But don't let me interfere—I'll amuse myself.

LADY D. But we are forgetting we have other guests. Where are they?

BLANCHE. I'll answer for everybody. Come, Val, we'll hunt them up. Miss Antique doesn't ride so Mr. Albert will have to risk his neck on horse-back to escape her. What a funny sight that will be! (*Laughs.*)

SIR ARTHUR. I'll keep the Admiral company until you are ready. Call me, please.

LADY D. We won't be but a few moments. Come along, you two.

Exit LADY D. R. followed by BLANCHE and VAL.

SIR JOHN. (*changing his seat to large Arm Chair C. by center table. Sir Arthur leans against Lounge.*) So you have bought Nugent's stud?

SIR ARTHUR. Yes, every item—horses, yearlings, paddocks and all, including taking over the stud grooms. Will you smoke? (*Offers Segar.*)

SIR JOHN. Thank you. (*Lights Segar. They smoke. Sir Arthur sits on Piano Stool.*) Upon my soul, Arthur, your extravagance makes my hair stand on end. Was Nugent hard up?

SIR ARTHUR. At the last gasp, I believe. To tell the truth I didn't care much about the 'Stud, but I like Nugent and I knew he had to make a quick turn to save himself from bankruptcy.

SIR JOHN. (*Reflectively.*) A man who inherited a fortune fit for a King! He ought to be sent to a lunatic asylum! (*Pauses.*) Arthur, if you don't look out, you'll get into the same scrape yourself.

SIR ARTHUR. (*laughing.*) Ha, ha, what an idea! Bulfinch and Keith look too closely after my affairs.

SIR JOHN. (*turning to him.*) A great deal *too* closely, perhaps.

SIR ARTHUR. (*rising and crossing to him.*) What do you mean? The Bulfinch's have been Solicitors to the Deverell's from time immemorial. I'd as soon mistrust myself as mistrust Bulfinch or Keith, though I'm not over fond of Bulfinch personally. I know *you* have always disliked him.

SIR JOHN. That's putting it mild. See here, Arthur, I've known you since you were a boy and I feel privileged to say what I think. I tell you you put too much confidence in those men. Do you ever look over an account?

SIR ARTHUR. (*resting on table.*) Never!

SIR JOHN. Or read a document?

SIR ARTHUR. Never! I signed two day before yesterday without looking at them.

SIR JOHN. (*rising and facing him,*) Then hang me, but you deserve to be swindled!

SIR ARTHUR. (*going to him.*) Sir John, either my confidence in people is unlimited or I haven't any. If I suspected a man I wouldn't keep him in my employ a minute. Suspicion is demoralizing.

SIR JOHN. And over confidence creates temptation, and from temptation to deceit is a very short step.

SIR ARTHUR. Not if people are honest.

SIR JOHN. Indeed! And how many are honest? Not one in a thousand.

SIR ARTHUR. My dear Sir John, that's your worldly view of things—the cold cynical theory of age.

SIR JOHN. Born of the mistaken sentimentality of youth! You ought to be more careful, Arthur, for the sake of your angel of a wife, if not for your own.

Enter Lady Deverell, R.

LADY D. (*advancing to him.*) We are all ready, Arthur. I'm sorry you will not join us Sir John; it doesn't seem polite to leave you alone.

SIR JOHN. Oh, my dear girl, I like solitude as you know.

SIR ARTHUR. And he deserves it. Come here, Kate. (*She goes to him, he puts one arm around her waist.*) What do you think he's been saying?

LADY D. Nothing uncomplimentary to me, I'm sure.

SIR ARTHUR. No, we are agreed that you are an Angel. But he as good as intimated that I dont think as much of you as I should.

LADY D. (*to Sir John.*) Did you?

SIR JOHN. Not at all in that sense.

SIR ARTHUR. Kate, do you think I love you?

LADY D. Do I think you love me? If I did not think so I—I would die! Oh, Arthur, how can you ask me such a question?

SIR ARTHUR. Because some people say I dont appreciate you.

LADY D. That is because you are too proud to wear your heart on your sleeve. But pride is the Deverell's heritage,—and really, Arthur, sometimes I think you have too much of it. But if Sir John said anything about your not appreciating me he was only teasing, I'm sure. (*Going to Sir John and taking his hands to hers.*) Wasn't you, now,—or did you really mean it?

SIR JOHN. Nonsense! I know he worships you. I only told him he ought to be more careful in business matters for your sake. But come, if you are going to Denham Chase you had better start or you wont be back in time for dinner,—and if there's anything I hate it's waiting for that.

SIR ARTHUR. Come, Kate; if Sir John wishes anything he knows where to find it.

LADY D. *Au revoir*, then; and I'll see that we *dont* keep you waiting for dinner. (*Laughs and Exits on Sir Arthur's arm through Porch.*)

SIR JOHN. (*re-lighting segar, taking a newspaper and crossing to exit R.*) Well, I do hope if only for the sake of his devoted and beautiful wife that no reverse of fortune will overtake Sir Arthur; but when one has been living for years at such a rate of extravagance as he has and is so entirely careless, not even an income of twenty thousand a year can stand it. (*Exits R.*)

Enter TOM., R. C.

TOM. This way, Mr. Bulfinch, this way. (*Enter Bulfinch, hat in hand.*) Now, then, what can I do for you?

BULF. Go to the devil!

TOM. (*making a profound bow.*) Thank you—much obliged to you—I'm in no hurry. Just as close as I want to be now.

BULF. Where's your master?

TOM. He's out.

BULF. Where's your mistress?

TOM. She's out too. I told you that but you would insist upon coming up here yourself. Now, then, look perhaps you'll find them under the sofa. (*Looks under Sofa.*) I dont see them.

BULF. See here, I've had enough of your impertinence upon other occasions. I dont want any more. If your Master chooses to tolerate your familiarities, I dont. Remember, I represent the law.

TOM. I have loads of respect for the law, Mr. Bulfinch, but mighty little for some of its representatives.

BULF. When will Sir Arthur return?

TOM. I dont know—I forgot to ask him. You can sit down and wait, if you want to—there's no silver lying around loose! I'll take your hat. (*Snatches hat out of his hand, goes to Piano and places it forcibly on Piano.*)

BULF. (*going to him—angrily.*) What do you mean by crushing my hat?

TOM. (*bowing profusely.*) Beg pardon, beg pardon; I thought it was you!

BULF. If you weren't so far beneath me I'd give you a thrashing you wouldn't forget in a hurry.

TOM. Dont let my being a servant interfere with your gratification, Mr. Bulfinch. Come on—try it! (*strikes fighting attitude.*)

BULF. (*going to him.*) You insolent hound!

TOM, (*sparring behind him.*) Oh, wouldn't I like to, though! Um! (*Goes to Piano, strikes out at Bulfinch's hat knocking it off the Piano.*) Lord! if his head had only been in it! (*Picks up hat, and brushes it off with his sleeve.*)

BULF. (*grasping him by shoulder.*) You shall pay for this! (*Enter Sir John R.*)

TOM. (*knocking his hand off.*) Hands off, Mr. Bulfinch, or it wont be healthy for you!

SIR JOHN. Hello! Tom, what does this mean?

TOM. Mr. Bulfinch, Sir John—we dont agree—we never do! (*Put, Bulfinch's hat on Piano.*)

SIR JOHN. Leave the room.

TOM. Yes, Sir John—beg your pardon, Sir John. (*at door, aside.*) You dont like him any better than I do. Sir John. Ugh! I'd give a month's wages just to hit him from the shoulder once! (*Opens door by striking it savagely with his fist, and exits banging it after him.*)

BULF. Good afternoon, Sir John. Lovely afternoon. I hope you are well.

SIR JOHN. Thank you. I am always well.

BULF. Ah, yes, I know. Shall I take a seat? (*Seats himself in Arm-chair. Sir John remains standing by Lounge.*) Sir Arthur out, I believe?

SIR JOHN. Yes; they're all out.

BULF. Dont mind my smoking, do you? (*Lights a Segar.*) Ah well, I'm not altogether sorry to find you alone. You are a very old friend, I believe, Sir John?

SIR JOHN. His oldest friend and his futher's before him. I look upon him as my own son.

BULF. That is very fortunate. You can smooth matters down.

SIR JOHN. (*Approaching him*) Smooth matters down? I dont understand you. If you have anything to say, say it. Is Sir Arthur in any difficulty?

BULF. Well—ah,—well—the fact is—(*rising.*) Percival Keith has bolted!

SIR JOHN. Percival Keith—ran away?

BULF. Yes—clean gone—not seen since yesterday morning,—evaporated.

SIR JOHN. (*sitting on lounge.*) Well, what of it? On second thoughts I consider it good-riddance to bad rubbish.

BULF. Just so, Sir John, just so,—if it wasn't for the consequences.

SIR JOHN. What consequences, Mr. Bulfinch?

BULF. Well—ah—say the breaking up of this lovely establishment, the sale of the estates, the —

SIR JOHN. (*grasping him savagely by the shoulder.*) Great Heavens! Sir, what do you mean?

BULF. If you'll kindly remove your hand, Sir John. My shoulder is tender. (*Sir John does so—Bulfinch rubs his shoulder.*) Ah, thank you. To come down to plain matter of fact, Sir Arthur's reckless course for years has resulted in hopelessly encumbering the estates,—some heavy sums are now due—and Mr. Keith has taken all the available cash with him!

SIR JOHN. (*Sinking in Arm-Chair.*) Is this possible? Why, he had a clear twenty-thousand a year.

BULF. (*on Piano Stool.*) Exactly,—quite correct. But if you have twenty and live at the rate of forty, you can hardly end up a Millionaire.

SIR JOHN. (*after a pause.*) I never dreamed of this. I knew he was reckless, but I did not suppose he was on the brink of ruin.

BULF. Excuse me, Sir John, he's not on the brink, he's at the bottom of the pit, Sir,—absolutely and unqualifiedly the bottom!

SIR JOHN. (*going to him threateningly.*) Upon my soul, Sir, I should

like to pitch you after him ! It was your place as his legal adviser to take care of him, you —

BULF. (*rising*) Gently, Sir John, gently. I was not his legal adviser,—I simply transacted legal matters for him. Kindly observe the distinction.

SIR JOHN. What legal matters?

BULF. Oh,—well—ah, leases loans, mortgages—

SIR JOHN. Mortgages !

BULF. Most certainly,—mortgages upon mortgages and at heavy interest,—some on this charming place, too.

SIR JOHN. (*sitting on Lounge.*) In heaven's name, what is to be the result of all this?

BULF. Foreclosure—ruin—penury—possibly arrest ! .

SIR JOHN. (*springing up*) Never ! Never, so help me Heaven ! if I spend the last shilling I have in the world !

BULF. (*cooly, sitting in Arm-chair.*) Very fine, Sir John, very fine ! Sounds like Damon and Pythias. I honor your warm heart, but I fear its larger than your Bank account. The estates might have cleared him,—but the money ! Fifteen thousand, for example, lodged in Bank to pay Nugent for his stud, carried off in clean cash. Another check for three thousand for a single picture—presented this morning and dishonored. And Lord knows how many more for just such useless trumpery ! Fact is, Sir John, Sir Arthur never understood the value of money—thought an income like his would stretch out indefinitely like India Rubber, but even rubber will snap at a certain point. Sir Arthur, I am sorry to say,—deeply sorry, believe me,—has reached that point.

SIR JOHN. (*crossing to him excitedly.*) I do not believe you are sorry, I believe you are an infernal villian and hypocrit, Sir !

BULF. (*rising—cooly.*) That's slander, Sir John. I suppose you know there's a law against it.

SIR JOHN. It was your place Sir, when he came to you about these loans and mortgages to have remonstrated and advised him— the least you could have done as his family solicitor.

BULF. My dear Sir, I was assured by Keith that he would never read a single document ; and as for remonstrating and advising him,—on a question of law, yes ; on his personal conduct—well, I know my place better. A proud lot these Deverell's,—always were—prouder than Lucifer ! He'd have told me to go to the Devil !

SIR JOHN. That's where you ought to go, Sir !

BULF. (*puffing Segar*) Ah, yes, that may be your opinion,—but it isn't mine !

SIR JOHN. What opinion can I have when you admit you went on drawing deeds which meant simply ruin, without insisting on an explanation? Did you consider that right?

BULF. (*sitting.*) I did; perhaps it was a mistake. But it is useless agitating yourself further, Sir John; we must all submit to the decrees of Providence.

SIR JOHN, (*approaching him.*) Do you call this a decree of Providence?

BULF. Why—of course.

SIR JOHN. (*facing him.*) Providence may decree that a man who wont look after his own affairs should come to grief; but it is equally a decree of Providence that I should call all those who have had a hand in this affair a set of infernal swindlers, Sir! (*bringing fist down on table*)

BULF. (*rising.*) Excuse me, Sir John, but you are exceeding the legal limits of vituperation.

SIR JOHN. (*grasping him,*) It would n't take much more, Sir, to make me exceed the limits of *castigation* allowed by law. (*Shakes him.*) (*During this last speech LADY DEVERELL has appeared on the Porch and now comes down hurriedly.*)

LADY D. Why, Sir John,—what does this mean? (*Sir John releases Bulfinch.*)

BULF. Lady Deverell! (*Goes to Piano.*)

SIR JOHN. Kate! you back? What has happened?

LADY D. Arthur's horse lost a shoe and the wagonette broke down at the same time; so we've had to return. Now, allow me to ask what has happened here?

SIR JOHN. (*nervously.*) Nothing, Kate, —nothing. Mr. Bulfinch and I have been having a little dispute.

LADY D. I know better,—something *has* happened; I see it in your face. Tell me,—what is it?

SIR JOHN. Where is Sir Arthur?

Enter SIR ARTHUR from Porch.

SIR ARTHUR. I am here. (*Advances to them.*) Hello! you here, Bulfinch?

BULF. Perhaps —perhaps it would be as well if Lady Deverell would retire.

LADY D. (*going to Sir Arthur.*) Lady Deverell's place, if there is any trouble, is by her husband's side. Arthur, sit down. (*Seats him in arm-chair and stands by him.*) Do not deceive me; I see that something terrible has occurred. I have had a feeling of evil over me all day—I haven't known why. Arthur, *please* let me remain.

SIR ARTHUR. (*taking her hand*) Sir John,—Mr. Bulfinch,—have you lost your tongues?

SIR JOHN. It is a hard task for one who loves you as I do to—to—Heaven help you to bear it patiently!

SIR ARTHUR. What on earth do you mean?

BULF. He means, Sir Arthur, that Mr. Percival Keith has absconded with a large sum of your money!

LADY D. Impossible!

SIR ARTHUR. Keith absconded? I decline to believe it

SIR JOHN. It is only too true,—Kate, wont you leave us?

LADY D. No! You have not told the worst. What is it?

SIR ARTHUR. (*after a pause.*) Go on, gentlemen. After telling me that the man I trusted as if he were my own brother, has played me false, I am not likely to be greatly disturbed by any further intelligence.

LADY D. (*taking his hand.*) Arthur!

SIR ARTHUR. (*after a pause.*) Go on, gentlemen; I am waiting.

SIR JOHN. (*breaking down and sinking on Lounge.*) I—I—cannot say it.

LADY D. Then, Mr. Bulfinch, show us your face. Speak out, man.

BULF. (*turning around.*) If I must, I must. Pardon my abruptness; Deverell—you are a ruined man!

SIR ARTHUR. Great Heavens! (*Drops into Arm-chair, and buries his face in his hands on table.*)

LADY D. (*bending over him.*) Arthur, I am here—by your side. Don't give way so; for my sake, be brave and face the worst. It may not be so terrible.

SIR JOHN. It is useless disguising the fact, Kate. Arthur's property is hopelessly involved; the scoundrel has effected his complete ruin.

SIR ARTHUR. (*looking up.*) It is ridiculous to talk of *complete* ruin with my income! Tell me plainly, Mr. Bulfinch to what extent am I involved? Must I mortgage this place?

BULF.. Hem—ha,—it is already done.

SIR ARTHUR. What is done?

BULF. Norton Towers is mortgaged! And to the last farthing it is worth!

SIR ARTHUR, (*rising.*) It is a lie! Who authorized such a mortgage, I should like to know?

BULF. (*handing him a paper*) You did! Look at it!

SIR ARTHUR. (*looking at paper.*) The villain! he never told me the contents.

BULF. You declined to hear them, he told me. Isn't that true?

SIR ARTHUR. Too true—damn him !

LADY D. Arthur ! be calm—for my sake.

BULF. You cant save a hundred pounds from the wreck.

SIR JOHN. Why not ? If Nugent will withdraw his claim—

SIR ARTHUR. He will not ! I will not allow him.

SIR JOHN. (*rising.*) Arthur, think of your wife—

SIR ARTHUR. My wife ! oh, Kate ! (*sinks into Arm Chair.*)

LADY D. (*caressing him.*) Arthur ! Arthur ! As long as I have you I am content. If the rest must all go, let it go ! Your honor is dearer to me than money, and we will save it at any sacrifice.

BULF. Hem ! supposing the estate wont cover the liabilities, Nugent will have to take his share with the rest.

LADY D. The estate shall cover the liabilities if our last acre in the world has to be sold, the last picture on the walls ! (*Blanche, Val. Miss Antique, Albert and Guests appear on Porch, talking together, etc.*)

BULF. (*aside.*) I'll humble the Deverell pride yet, my lady !

LADY D. (*crossing to Bulfinch.*) Mr. Bulfinch, an instinct tells me that you are at the bottom of this villiany ! Heaven pardon me if I am wrong ; but if I am not, mark my words : your crime will one day find you out as sure as there is a God above us ! Leave this house !

SIR ARTHUR. (*rising.*) Kate ! (*She goes to him.*) My own, brave wife ! (*embrac'ng her.*) Can you ever forgive me for bringing this ruin upon you ? Heaven help me ! how can I ask you to share privation with me,—how—

LADY D. Hush, Arthur ! not a word of reproach. I should be unworthy your name if I forgot your honor ; I should merit only contempt if I forgot the vows I pledged at the altar,—to love and cherish and care for you, in sickness as in health—in sorrow as in sunshine,—in adversity as in prosperity,—oh, Arthur,—my love,—my husband ! (*Her arms are around his neck. He bends to kiss her as Curtain falls.*)

CURTAIN—PICTURE.

SIR JOHN on Lounge, attitude of dejection—BULFINCH by Piano, hat in hand, sneering—Other characters and Guests on Porch as stated above.—LADY D. and SIR ARTHUR C.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

THE SACRIFICE!

SCENE:

A Room in a London Cheap Lodging House—It is barely furnished, evidencing great poverty—A door, (practical,) L. C. back, apparently opening into another Room—Table C.—A small Fireplace up Stage R.—Fire in it—A couple of chairs in the Room—Small cupboard R. against back of scene. Some glasses and dishes upon it; also Pen and Ink.

As Curtain rises Enter Susan. She carries in one hand a small Tray with some dishes and food upon it, and in the other a black Kettie. She places the Tray upon the Table, and the Kettle on the Fire, steadying it after much difficulty. Then turns around with her hands on her hips.

SUSAN. Oh my precious legs! Whatever hin the world made people build 'ouses hup hin the sky, bothers me! Must be ha purpose to try servant's legs. Hits lucky mine's ha pair hof good 'uns! Four pair hof stairs hup here, twenty-five to heach pair, to go hup hand down ha dozen times ha mornin',—that mayn't be a thousand steps hall told but hit feels mighty like hit. One might has well go to ha treadmill hand be done with hit! (*Takes a Duster and brushes around.*) 'Ow-somever I'd wear my feet down to stumps for these two hup 'ere. Ha real lady she his —dont hoften see 'em! Has for him, poor devil! you might blow him haway with a sixpenny bellus! (*Coughing heard outside. Susan by table.*) Hear that! He's wuss hagain to-day—seems has hif he'd break to pieces when he coughs. Hi wouldn't give ha halfpenny for his living hin this 'ere fog hand smoke.

Enter MRS. MORLEY (*Lady Deverell*), through door L. C. back. *She is dressed very plainly and is very pale. Walks very slowly.*

SUSAN. Good-mornin', Mum.—'ow his Mr. Morley this mornin'?

MRS. M. He's had a bad night, Susan. (*Advancing and taking her hand.*) Susan, I am very sorry to trouble you but would you bring me up a little saucer and one of the new laid eggs?

SUSAN. (*aside.*) Oh, my precious legs! (*aloud.*) No trouble hat hall, Mum,—for you. There's honly one hegg left, though.

MRS. M. That is all I want. Why, Susan, you've forgotten to wash your face again.

SUSAN. Haint 'ad time, Mum. Besides hits no huse whatsumever.

MRS. M. Why not Susan?

SUSAN. Cos I should be has black has a nigger in 'alf han 'our again Was you hever hin ha London lodging-'ouse kitchen, Mum?

MRS. M. I must confess I never have been, Susan.

SUSAN. Then dont you never go. You wouldn't hexpect my face to be clean hif you did! hand I'll warrant you'd never heat no more dinner has long has you're 'ere.

MRS. M. (*sitting by Table.*) Oh, Susan!

SUSAN. What with the beetles hand hother things has crawls hover heverythink hits henough to hupset me let halone ha lady like you. Beetles his bad enough when you're hawake; but when you're hasleep, —well, they're worse!

MRS. M. Asleep? Surely you do not sleep down there?

SUSAN. There haint no place helse for me. I've got used to hit hand my beauty wont spoil. But I'll get the hegg, Mum. (*Exits R.*)

MRS. M. Poor thing! poor thing! She has a good heart in spite of her dirty face. And after all who is better off—she or I? She does her work and hard as it is, has no anxiety either for the present or the future, while I—I—God help me! how is this to end? (*Rises and paces the Stage.*) Oh, I have tried so hard to get some employment I could do to earn something to give him a little comfort. It is so hard to see him suffering and reduced to such poverty after all the luxury he has been accustomed to. And he tries to bear it so bravely. If he would only let me apply for help to some of our friends of the past. But no, he will not—not while he lives,—the Deverell pride will not allow it—and so they do not know what we suffer, And I do not dare to disobey him. I do not dare to tell them; he would never forgive me if he found it out. And then if they refused! The world's friendship withers before Fortune's frown.

Re-enter SUSAN R with an Egg on a Saucer.

SUSAN. 'Ere hit his Mum,—good hand fresh,—leastwise has fresh has hany City hegg dares to be, Mum!

MRS. M. (*taking the Saucer.*) Thank you, Susan; you are very kind.

SUSAN. Lord bless you, Mum, you makes too much hof me. I haint used to hit; I'm used to bein' shouted hat: "Urry hup hind get hout!" I hunderstand that sort hof thing. But you're ha hangel, you are, hand you dont talk that way. I suppose hangel's dont know 'ow!

MRS. M. (*smiling.*) I am afraid, Susan, I am much below the angels.

SUSAN. Not very much hon the top floor hof this skyscraper. Mum! 'Pears to me ha few more pair hof stairs would reach 'eaven! Got hall you want, Mum?

MRS. M. Yes, thank you.

SUSAN. Then I'll 'ave to leave. They're shoutin' Susan hon hevery floor has hif there was a dozen hof me! (*Exits R.*)

Coughing heard again.

MRS. M. That terrible cough! it is killing him before my eyes. Oh, if I could only get him away from this horrible fog and smoke into the fresh, pure air of the country! (*Looks at her purse.*) One pound and a shilling,—all I have left in the world! And I do not dare tel him for fear of worrying him. Oh, Arthur, would I could give my life for yours! (*Takes the Saucer and goes into Room; then returns.*) He refuses to take it; he is fretful and peevish and keeps calling for the Doctor. I wish he would come.

Enter SUSAN R.

SUSAN. The Doctor, Mum.

Enter DOCTOR HUME, R.

MRS. M. (*advancing to him and taking his hand which he has extended.*) Oh, Doctor, I have been so anxious to see you.

DOCTOR. Not so well this morning?

MRS. M. I—I am afraid not. Will you go in? (*Opens door of Room and exits followed by him.*)

SUSAN. Ha nice man that Doctor his! His hedication 'asn't robbed 'im hof 'is 'art! He's so nice hevery time I sees 'im I feels like gettin' sick myself!

Enter TOM with a handsome bouquet of flowers in a tumbler of water.

TOM. Ah, Susan, my dear, see what I've brought you. (*Hands her flowers.*)

SUSAN. (*to king them.*) For me!

TOM. Well, no,—not exactly. For your Mistress, Mrs. Morley, with the compliments of my Master, Mr. Herbert. Thank you! (*Sits on Table.*)

SUSAN. (*smelling flowers.*) My! but them's lovely! Smells like ha whole perfumery shop. Cost ha pretty penny, I reckon.

TOM. You reckon correctly.

SUSAN. (*going to him.*) Say, Tom, your Master's ha deep 'un, he his!

TOM. Oh, is he?

SUSAN. He's paintin' ha picture he 'opes to make ha name with—

TOM. It must be yours!

SUSAN. Ha Lady—ha La Go—something or other—

TOM. Not that kind of a lady at all, Susan,—a Lady Godiva,—you never knew her!

SUSAN. Hand he wants to get Mrs. Morley to sit for 'im,—that's what he's hafter!

TOM. (*getting off Table.*) Oh, is he? Susan, you've got a great head! (*Places his hand on her head.*)

SUSAN. Why, he told me hisself he'd give her fifty pounds, honly I haunt dared tell her! I wish he'd take me. I dont see nothin' wrong hin hit!

TOM. Susan, you're good but you're not pretty. Your photographs will never be for sale in the shop windows! Dont you be too inquisitive or ask too many questions!

SUSAN. (*going to him.*) Why, Tom, I've never heven hasked you who you were!

TOM. (*putting arm around her waist.*) Well, dont! I've almost forgotten myself. It is enough that I came here with Mr. and Mrs. Morley and that I'm now with Mr. Herbert. I haven't improved the situation I was in before I came here, but I've met you and it suits me to be around these quarters!

SUSAN. (*laying her head on his shoulder.*) Tom, do you know I like you?

TOM. (*pressing her head down.*) Yes, I have discovered that, Susan; it shows your good taste. As I remarked before, you're not beautiful but you're good. And I was always taught to cling to the good. (*Drawing her closely to him in embrace.*) I'm clinging!

SUSAN. Oh, Tom!

TOM. Witness my seal! (*Kisses her.*)

SUSAN. (*freeing herself from him.*) Tom! what are you doing?

TOM. Nothing, just now; I've done it! But if you dont like it I'll take it back! (*Kisses her again.*)

SUSAN. Take that! (*Boxes his ears.*)

TOM. Thank you! That's returning evil for good! I'll come

again when I cant stay so long! Fare thee well, my own sweet love.
We shall meet in the sweet by-and-by! (*Exits R.*)

SUSAN. Well! that's the first man has hever kissed me! (*Smacks her lips.*) I tastes it yet—'taint hat hall bid!

Enter MRS. MORLEY quickly from Room.

MRS. MORLEY. Susan, a wineglass, quick! He has fainted! (*Susan rushes to cupboard, gets wineglass and bottle of wine, and hands them to MRS. MORLEY who exits into room.*)

SUSAN. Things is gettin wuss! It will be ha hearse and fixin soon hif this dont stop,—with ha couple of solemn-looking mummies hat the door fust thing in the mornin', to make the 'ouse look cheerful hand collect ha crowd!

Enter DR. HUME from room.

DOCTOR. (*sitting at table.*) Give me a pen and ink. (*SUSAN does so getting them from cupboard.*) That will do. (*Writes.*)

SUSAN (*aside.*) Goin' to pour some more of that houtlandish Latin down the man! (*aloud.*) Please, Sir, 'ow his the gentleman this mornin'?

DOCTOR. Very poorly. You needn't wait. (*Exit SUSAN R.*) A bad case—a very bad case. Unless he gets a change to a mild climate. he wont be alive in a month. But what's the use of suggesting it when they dont seem to have enough to keep body and soul together as it is? (*Rises as MRS. MORLEY enters.*)

MRS. M. He is easier now. (*Going to him.*) Doctor, I want you to tell me what you think of him. I cannot bear this suspense any longer,—it is killing me.

DOCTOR. (*aside.*) Poor woman! she idolizes him. (*aloud.*) Will you be seated, Mrs Morley? (*Hands her a chair. She sits.*)

Mrs. M. Tell me the whole truth, Doctor. Is he—is he—in great danger?

DOCTOR. (*after a pause.*) In imminent danger!

MRS. M. Oh, God! (*Her head falls on table.*)

DOCTOR. (*going to her.*) Mrs. Morley—control yourself.

MRS. M. (*rising quickly and grasping his hands.*) Save him,—save him to me, Doctor! Is there nothing can be done?

DOCTOR. He must have a change of climate. Under other circumstances I would recommend the South of France; failing that even the Isle of Wight.

MRS. M. And do you think—do you think that—would save him?

DOCTOR. With good nursing it probably would.

MRS. M. It must be done ; he must be saved ! But how—ho !

DOCTOR. Pardon me, Mrs. Morley, but I have formed the idea that you have seen better days. In such a crisis as this may I venture to suggest an appeal to your friends ?

MRS. MORLEY. (*at table.*) It is impossible. The only friend to whom I might appeal with confidence, my husband's oldest friend, is abroad with his ship. The others I might think of do not remain in London at this time of year ; and even if they were here my husband would never consent, and knowing him as I do I would not dare ask them.

DOCTOR. (*aside.*) Oh, pride, pride !

MRS. MORLEY. We have seen better days, Doctor—much better days. My husband was wealthy ; but a trusted agent robbed him of all he possessed. He is a very proud man—proud almost beyond conception. Had he been less honorable he might from the wreck of his fortune, have saved a competence. But he could only save his honor through the sacrifice of all, and that sacrifice was made even to my last jewel. Only a few pounds were left us on which we hoped to subsist until he could obtain some employment ; but alas ! this fatal illness has frustrated that hope, and I have seen the small sum we had rapidly dwindle. He has become too ill to be conscious of this, and I have not dared tell him for fear anxiety for me should kill him.

DOCTOR. And could you find nothing that you could do ?

MRS. M. Nothing ! I have tried my needle ; God knows what I have not tried ! But everywhere I have found the supply greater than the demand. Oh, the bitterness of being crowded out and crushed in the struggle for bare existence ! It is terrible—terrible !

DOCTOR. (*taking her hand.*) I know what it is, Mrs. Morley. Unfortunately I am a poor man myself with a hard struggle before me. But I have never felt my inability to be generous more keenly than I do now.

MRS. M. I believe you—and I thank you. But I could not accept your help. I must end this fight as I commenced it—alone. Suppose I accepted money from friends ; I could not go on subsisting on charity forever. No—some other means *must* be found.

DOCTOR. (*aside.*) Shall I tell her ? It is a delicate thing to do.

MRS. M. (*after thinking.*) You say a change to the Isle of Wight might save him ?

DOCTOR. It is more than likely. These London fogs are fast tightening the clutch of Death upon him. (*She turns away with a moan and sinks in chair by table.*)

MRS. M. (*after a pause.*) Is the change necessary—at once?

DOCTOR. A delay—even of a few days—may be fatal. (*She drops her face on her hands and sobs.*)

MRS. M. My God! my God! what can I do?

DOCTOR. (*bending over her.*) Forgive me for painning you so; but it is always wise to be prepared for the worst.

MRS. M. Thank you, Doctor, and pardon my—my weakness.

DOCTOR. Mrs. Morley, I am going to take the risk of offending you—perhaps mortally. But believe me, I do so with the sincere desire of aiding you.

MRS. M. (*looking up quickly.*) Yes, yes—what is it?

DOCTOR. I have a friend—a patient—Herbert by name. He is an artist and has a studio in this house. May I proceed?

MRS. M. (*Rising—after a pause and with a gasp.*) Well?

DOCTOR. He has seen you and purely with an artist's eye has admired your perfect figure.

MRS. M. (*after a pause—as before.*) Well?

DOCTOR. He—he has told me that—and believe me he is an honorable gentleman—that he would pay handsomely if I could find him some one like you who would sit for him a couple of times for a picture he is painting.

MRS. M. (*Grasps back of chair, staggers, then sinks into chair and bursts out weeping.*) Merciful Father! has it come to this!

DOCTOR. The idea of being a model shocks you. I do not wonder. But there is no reason why you should think it degrading. It is an injustice to many a virtuous woman.

MRS. M. No! No! I cannot do it! He would kill me if he found it out!

DOCTOR. He need never know it—and it may save his life!

MRS. M. (*after a pause.*) To save his life—oh, God, to save his life! But I cannot—I cannot!

DOCTOR. Pardon me for mentioning it. I did not mean to insult you.

MRS. M. (*rising and taking his hand.*) I know it. Doctor, and I thank you for your candor and—and your generous sympathy. But what you suggest is an impossibility. Heaven may yet send some way of saving him.

DOCTOR. Good-bye, then, for the present. Any medical skill I possess I place at your service only too gladly. Would to God I could do more.
(*Drops her hand and exits R.*)

MRS. M. (*leaning against chair.*) Is this a horrible dream? Have I

not suffered enough in these last sad months but I must be brought face to face with this awful reality? Oh, Arthur, my own, can it be possible a few days may part us forever? (*Paces up and down.*) It cannot be; I cannot believe it. (*Stops.*) And yet I can see the truth in the wan cheeks, in the sunken eyes, in the thin lips pale with the pallor of death! It must not—shall not be! (*Sinks into chair.*) Oh, the folly of my past life, how it comes back to me! A sum that I wasted on a wretched trinket might save his life! We are so blind—we are so blind! (*Rises.*) And yet, what can I do—what can I do?

(*Exits into Room.*)

Enter BULFINCH R.

BULF. (*surveying the room.*) Hem! isn't very much here! Rather a come down for my proud folks. They wont snub Bulfinch quite as much as they used to. And if she hasn't had enough of him by this time she must be a bigger fool than I take her for. It's Bu'finch's turn now—played the cards well to become master of Norton Towers. Now if I can only become master of its former mistress! She refused me once, before she married him. Lucky for me she never told him. I don't know whether I hate her or love her most now!

Enter Mrs. Morley from Room.

MRS. M. (*seeing him.*) Mr Bulfinch!

BULF. Yes my Lady—Mr. Bulfinch. Quite unexpected, no doubt, but I trust will be no less welcome.

MRS. M. Oh, thank Heaven! you have some good news for me, then?

BULF. Well, that depends! Take a seat, Lady Deverell—or do you prefer that I should call you Mrs. Morley here?

MRS. M. (*sitting.*) Mrs. Morley. But tell me, what brings you here? Speak—do not keep me in suspense.

BULF. Not so fast, please. How is he? I heard he was dying. (*Mrs. Morley bends her head and sobs.*) You seem to have been having a pretty hard time,—I might say a very hard time?

MRS. M. Yes—so hard, oh, so hard!

BULF. (*as if to himself.*) A nice man—pretty specimen—to bring his wife to this!

MRS. M. (*springing up.*) Stop, Sir! You shall not insult my husband.

BULF. Beg pardon; I didn't mean that for your ears. But you forget how painful it must be to me to see you in this condition; you forget that I have loved you—that (*grasping her hand and falling on his knees.*) I love you still!

MRS. M. (*struggling to release herself*). Great Heaven ! must I listen to this ? Let me go !

BULF. (*rising but still holding her*.) You shall listen to me. I am the master of Norton Towers now—

MRS. M. You !

BULF. Yes—I bought it at the foreclosure. I love you better than he does—better than he ever has. Listen to reason : Norton Towers is open to you to come back as its mistress, if you will. Dont be a fool !

MRS. MORLEY. (*releasing her hand*.) Oh, God ! this insult ! Leave me—leave me at once you miserable cur, before in desperation I take your worthless life ! Out of my sight ! (*Sinks in chair and weeps*.)

BULF. (*composing himself*.) Very well ; if you prefer heroics take the consequences ! I beg to inform you that I am the landlord of this house and my agent tells me there are two months rent due. Unless it is paid by this evening, to-morrow morning I'll bundle you both out upon the street. (*Enter Susan R. Stops by door*.)

MRS. M. (*rising quickly and springing at his throat*.) Wretch ! you would not dare ! (*Bulf. pulls himself away*.)

BULF. We'll see about that. I can be as merciless to you as you are to me—I—

MRS. M. Stop ! You are driving me to madness. Leave this room at once. (*Turns and goes up*.)

SUSAN. See 'ere, Mister, why dont you get hout when you're told ?

BULF. None of your impudence. I am the Master of this house.

SUSAN. I dont care hif you are or not. Get hout ! You wont ? Well, I'll make you ! (*Catches hold of him and pushes him to door R.*)

BULF. (*in a rage*.) I'll discharge you for this, you hussey !

SUSAN. (*opening door*.) Discharge hand be 'anged to you ! (*Pushes him out and closes door with a bang*.) There ! 'e's gone quicker than 'e expected to (*Goes to Mrs. Morley who has been weeping*.) Why didn't you call me before, Mum ?

MRS. M. (*taking her hands*.) Oh, Susan, I fear you have got yourself into trouble for me. (*Dries her eyes*.)

SUSAN. Not a bit hof hit. Dont you worrit yourself habout me. Now, sit down there. Mum, hand decompose yourself. 'E wont come back hin a 'urry. (*Seats Mrs. Morley in chair by table*.)

MRS. M. Oh what terrible fate pursues me ! What shall I do—what shall I do ! (*After a moment*.) There ! I am better now. (*Rises and sees flowers on table*.) Flowers ! Where did these come from ?

SUSAN. Oh, I forgot, Mum. Mr. 'Erbert, the hartist what has the

ground floor, sent them with 'is compliments. 'E knew the gentleman was hill hand thought 'e might enjoy them.

MRS. M. (*rising nervously.*) The artist again! What terrible fatality is this? Or is—is it the hand of Providence bringing me relief?

SUSAN. (*going to her.*) There's more ways than one hof getting fifty pounds. Mum.

MRS. M. (*turning sharply.*) What dō you mean?

SUSAN. Well, Mum,—you wont be hangry with me, Mum?

MRR. M. No, no,—go on.

SUSAN. 'E's painting a Lady—a Lady Go somethin or hother, Mum, hand 'e said, Mum—(*Whispering to her.*)

MRS. M. How dare you—how dare you! Leave the room instantly! The insult! Oh, is there no one to protect me? Do you hear me—leave the room!

SUSAN. (*sobbing—apron to her eyes.*) I only did hit to 'elp you, Mum. 'E's a real gentleman hand you needn't be a bit afeerd hof 'im. Forgive me, Mum!

MRS. M. (*pacing up and down.*) And yet to save him—to save *him*! But the shame—the degradation! God help me! What shall I do? (*Severe coughing heard.*)

SUSAN. Listen to that! I didn't mean to say no more, but I *must*. You haint goin' to let 'im lay there hand die!

MRS. M. (*grasping back of chair.*) Die! Oh, God! no! no! He must be saved if I sacrifice my soul. (*A knock heard.*)

SUSAN. Shall I hopen the door, Mum?

MRS. M. Yes. (*Susan opens door. Enter Mr. Herbert.*)

SUSAN. Mr. 'Erbert. (*MRS. M. staggers. He rushes to and catches her as she is about to fall. She recovers herself. SUSAN crosses to back of her.*)

MRS. M. Its nothing; I—I am a little faint.

HER. Pardon my intrusion; I will call again.

MRS. M. No, no—stay. (*aside.*) To save *him*! I must! (*aloud.*) I—I have heard—that you—

HER. Dont distress yourself, Madam; I understand what you would say. You were the ideal I had in my mind, and I would have liked—and though not wealthy I would have been willing to have paid—

MRS. M. (*hoarsely.*) How much?

HER. Fifty pounds!

MRS. M. (*aside.*) Fifty pounds—fifty pounds! And twenty may save him! (*Slow music, very low, till Curtain.*)

HER. (*about to leave*). But since it distresses you so, Madame,—
(*Severe coughing heard.*)

MRS. M. No, no! dont go! I—(*gasping.*) I—will—do it!

HER. (*extending his hand.*) You will!

MRS. M. (*grasping his hand—after a pause.*) Yes! (*Staggers and falls fainting to Stage.*)

QUICK CURTAIN.

ACT III.

(SIX MONTHS LATER.)

TABLEAU ONE—THE PICTURE OF A SACRIFICE.

TABLEAU TWO—THE REWARD OF A SACRIFICE.

SCENE :

Drawing Room at Miss Antique's handsomely furnished—At back C. is a heavy Red Curtain in one piece on Rings so as to be easily and quickly drawn back—Behind this Curtain on a large Easel is the picture of "The New Godiva," the Curtain when drawn open disclosing the outer Room—Lounge R.—Small Table L. C., Arm Chairs on both sides of it—A newspaper on the Lounge.

Blanche and Miss Antique discovered seated on Lounge, and Poindestre by Table.

BLANCHE. Yes,—Val and I called on Sir Arthur and Lady Deverell yesterday. She is just like her old self and he has entirely recovered and is more devoted than ever.

VAL. Well, he ought to be. A wife like that is a treasure one doesn't often find.

BLANCHE. How often does a man want to find one, pray? Aren't you satisfied?

VAL. I? Oh, my, yes—more than satisfied.

MISS AN. To think that they should have suffered so much when they had so many friends who would have been only too glad to have helped them.

VAL. Pride, my dear Miss Antique,—the Deverell pride. Sir Arthur carries it to an extreme ; I believe that man would starve before he'd accept assistance.

BLANCHE. Well, thank Heaven, it is all over now. It was very kind of the Admiral, dear old Sir John, to leave her his fortune; tied it up by his will, too, so that her husband can't touch it.

VAL. It isn't very much, but enough to keep them comfortably. Poor old Sir John, he was always very fond of her. If he hadn't been so far away on one of Her Majesty's ships so that he didn't know anything about it, they never would have known a day's want. He'd have hunted them up and forced them to accept a loan.

MISS AN. I wonder they are not here. I want them to come and see the great picture. I don't know what it is myself, and I'm quite anxious and curious to see it.

BLANCHE. What ! you haven't seen your own picture ?

MISS AN. To tell the truth, while it is reported to be mine, it isn't. It's only been brought here this morning, and its owner's been keeping watch that it shall not be seen until the friends he's invited arrive.

VAL. Who is its fortunate owner ?

MISS AN. My landlord ; and as he's a bachelor I've lent him my rooms for the benefit of his lady friends.

BLANCHE. Really. is there any mystery about its owner that you do not mention his name ?

MISS AN. Mr. Albert asked me not to. And you know I like to oblige him. But I don't mind telling you now because you'll learn soon, anyhow.

VAL. Well, who is this great art connoisseur ?

MISS AN. Its Mr. Bulfinch !

VAL. (*rising quickly.*) What ! a man who knows as much about art as a Diplomat does about truth ! And my dear Miss Antique, you have really asked Sir Arthur and his wife to come here ?

MISS AN. Why not ?

VAL. And did you tell them that *that* party owned the picture, and that *that* party would be here ?

MISS AN. Oh no ! I didn't say anything about the picture or Mr. Bulfinch. I was especially requested not to

BLANCHE. Who by ?

MISS AN. By Mr. Albert.

BLANCHE. Oh, of course, — excuse me for asking ; I didn't think.

MISS AN. Mr. Bulfinch asked him and he asked me. I hope he hasn't made any mistake.

VAL. My dear Miss Antique, he has a genius for mistakes.

MISS AN. I—I thought, perhaps, it wasn't exactly the thing. There might be a little feeling.

VAL. Hem! I should imagine so.

MISS AN. But Mr. Albert says Mr. Bulfinch is anxious to be friendly, and wants to make some arrangement to restore Norton Towers to them.

BLANCHE, My! how kind. I should never have expected it of him.

VAL. Nor I. But perhaps the devil isn't as black as he's painted. (*Bulfinch's voice heard outside: "All right,—all right. Tell them I'm here."*) Ah! here he comes! Suppose you leave me with him; I may be the best mediator, and pave the way.

BLANCHE. (*rising.*) Very well. I hope there will not be a scene and that it will be all right.

MISS AN. So do I, I'm sure. Shall we go? (*rises.*)

BLANCHE. Dont get into a quarrel with him, Val.

VAL. Oh. no! you needn't be afraid of that.

BLANCHE. Very well; we'll leave you then. (*Takes Miss Antique's Arm and Exits R. U. E.*)

VAL. (*after they have left.*) I certainly dont understand this, and I dont half like it. But strange things do happen sometimes! Perhaps this is one of the times.

Enter BULFINCH R. U. E.

BULF. (*advancing to him.*) Ah, my dear Mr. Poindestre, very glad to see you. Quite an honor. I'm sure as an artist you'll enjoy my picture.

VAL. (*coldly.*) I didn't know it was yours.

BULF. I'm quite aware of it. Very few do know it. Its a surprise I have for the public.

(*Enter SIR ARTHUR R. U. E. Starts back on seeing them.*)

VAL. (*seeing him and rushing to him.*) Arthur, old man, I'm awfully glad to see you.

SIR ARTHUR. Thank you, old fellow. Excuse me for interrupting you. My wife has gone up-stairs with the ladies, and I was sent in here; but—

VAL. (*aside to him.*) Dont mind Bulfinch; sit down here and read the paper while I talk to him a few minutes; it may be to your interest.

SIR ARTHUR. Very well; it isn't agreeable and if I had expected he was to be here I would not have come; but to oblige you I'll remain.

VAL. Thank you. (*Sir Arthur sits on lounge, takes up paper and reads.*)

VAL. (*aside.*) Now I wonder if I'm making a mess of it or not? (*Crosses to Bulf. who has gone to table L. C.*) It's very kind of you to give the public a surprise; and I assure you it *will* be a surprise to the public to find you a patron of art.

BULF. Thank you—thank you very much. But “a thing of beauty is a joy forever,” as Byron says.

VAL. Oh, does he? I thought it was Keats.

BULF. Well, Keats or Byron, what's the difference so long as he said it who said it? But sit down, sit down—I'll tell you all about my picture. (*aside.*) Now is my time

VAL. (*seating himself L. of table. Aside.*) I must let him bore me a little. I suppose, before I tackle him on Deverell.

BULF. (*seating himself in arm chair.*) The moment I saw that picture I said to myself. “Bulfinch, my boy, that's what you want.” I'm not much on art, but I know what I like, and I don't care what I pay for it.

VAL. (*yawning.*) One needn't care when one has the cash.

BULF. Quite so,—quite so.

VAL. But who's the painter?

BULF. A rising man—a very rising man,—Silas Herbert. (*Sir Arthur drops his paper.*)

VAL. Comparatively unknown, I think.

BULF. Yes, —but won't be long. Lived in the forsaken district of Bedford Square. (*Sir Arthur picks up his paper.*) By the way, there's a romantic, *very* romantic, story connected with that picture.

VAL. (*yawning.*) Yes? What is it?

BULF. Well, for a picture of that kind, you know,—a Lady Godiva,—an unexceptionable model combining a beautiful face with a perfect figure was necessary. Herbert hunted a long time before he found one to suit, but at last did so in a woman living in his house; perfect face, perfect figure. (*Takes a pinch of Snuff. Sir Arthur moves uneasily.*) She was the wife of a man in bad health lodging in a miserable attic in the house, and she supported him. They were in a bad way very bad way, and she accepted Herbert's overtures and sat once or twice. Was paid liberally—most liberally. Odd part of it was she disappeared with her husband immediately afterwards,

and Herbert hasn't been able to find her since. (*Sir Arthur has pressed paper close to his face.*)

VAL. I know most of the good models,—what was her name?

BULF. Let me see, — let me see. (*Takes out a Note Book.*) But you musn't let it go any further; it was told me in confidence, quite accidentally, as it were. Have I your promise?

VAL. Why, of course.

BULF. (*turning leaves of book.*) I made a note of it somewhere's,—yes, here it is, — name Mrs. Morley; address—15 Charlotte Street.

SIR ARTHUR. (*Rising quickly and crushing paper in his hand.*) You lie!

BULF. (*he and Val. rising quickly.*) What's that?

SIR ARTHUR. (*crossing to him.*) I say you lie!

VAL. (*crossing and taking his arm.*) Deverell, let me entreat you to keep calm.

SIR ARTHUR. (*pushing him away.*) Stand back! The lady this scoundrel has slandered is Lady Deverell, my wife!

VAL. *aside.*) What insanity to have forgotten this!

BULF. (*with bravado.*) I know you and your infernal pride of old, Sir Arthur. But I did not know when I mentioned the name that Mrs. Morley and Lady Deverell were identical. Still, I repeat it. Mrs. Morley of Charlotte Street sat for Herbert's Lady Godiva as surely as I stand here.

SIR ARTHUR. (*grasping him by the throat.*) You cur! You double liar! You know I adopted the name of Morley for you wrote me under that name. Retract what you have said or I will break every bone in your miserable body!

VAL. (*taking hold of him.*) Deverell, — Arthur, for Heaven's sake don't let us have a scene; all London will talk of it.

SIR ARTHUR. (*releasing Bulf.*) Am I to stand here and listen to such a foul aspersion on the purest woman who ever lived? whose name in this fellow's mouth is pollution? Great Heavens! what do you take me for? (*To Bulf.*) Once more, will you recall your words?

Enter R. U. E., BLANCHE, ALBERT and LADY DEVERELL; L. U. E., MISS ANTIQUE and HERBERT.

BULF. I will not! They are the truth!

SIR ARTHUR. Then take the consequences! (*Springs at him. Lady D. rushes down and between them and catches his arm as he is about to strike Bulf.*)

LADY D. Stop, for Heaven's sake! Arthur, what does this mean?

SIR ARTHUR. It means that this villain has slandered you! that he says you have been an artist's model!

LADY D. (*aside.*) Oh, God! he has heard! (*aloud.*) It is a lie!

SIR ARTHUR. (*taking her hand.*) I know it. And he shall answer for it!

(*Positions on Stage: Bulf. by Table L. C.; Sir Arthur on his R., Albert and Blanche up Stage near R. U. E.; Herbert and Miss An. same position L. U. E.; Val. back of Bulf. between him and Sir Arthur. Lady D's face is turned partly away from the audience.*)

BULF. Oh, is it? Suppose you ask the artist himself,—there he is!

LADY D. (*aside.*) Merciful Heaven! I am lost!

SIR ARTHUR. (*to her.*) Kate, be brave; don't tremble so. (*She clings to him. Herbert has come partly down next to Val.*)

VAL. (*to Herbert.*) Even if it is true deny it—for her sake!

BULF. Mr. Herbert, I have been called a liar. I want you to tell this maniac who sat for your picture of Lady Godiva; he chooses to disbelieve your word to me.

HERBERT. Surely you have not broken my confidence?

BULF. I have been forced to.

HERBERT. You are unfair to an unfortunate woman,—unfair to me. And a man who will betray confidence is a man who will lie!

VAL. There, Arthur, be satisfied.

SIR ARTHUR. (*dropping Lady D's hand.* I am not. (*Lady D. turns back fully on Audience and sobs.*) I want an explicit denial. Mr. Herbert, this man has cast a foul aspersion on my wife; he calls upon you to prove it,—I call upon you to deny it.

HERBERT. I know nothing of Lady Deverell,—I have never seen her. (*Sir Arthur grasps his hand. Blanche has come down to Lady D. who is sobbing on her shoulder.*)

BULF. But you have heard of Mrs Morley!

HERBERT. (*after a pause,—dropping Sir Arthur's hand.*) I—have never heard the name! (*Turns to go up.*)

SIR ARTHUR. (*to Bulfinch.*) You infernal scoundrel! you shall hear from me! Come, Kate. (*Turns as if to go.*)

BULF. One moment! (*Sir Arthur turns to him.*) This is a conspiracy against me. But I have better proof than words.—I have the picture. It is behind that curtain. Look at it! (*Moves to go up.*)

VAL. (*stopping him.*) Stand where you are!

LADY D. (*rushing to Sir Arthur and grasping his arm.*) Arthur, you are killing me. Come home, for mercy's sake, for the sake of all

you hold dear on earth or in heaven, come home,—come with me,—at once! Don't look at it, I beg, I pray of you!

BULF. You see,—she is afraid! You dare not look at it!

SIS ARTHUR. You hound! I dare!

LADY D. (*clinging to him.*) Arthur, in the name of Heaven—

SIR ARTHUR. Out of my way! I'll brand this man a liar out of his own mouth! (*Pushes her off, rushes up stage and draws Curtain back quickly, disclosing the Picture. Calcium light thrown upon it. N. B. This must be done rapidly.*) My God! it is my wife! (*Lady D. rushes after him, falls on her knees with bowed head and in attitude of intense shame at his feet, hands outstretched.*)

LADY D. Mercy! have mercy!

QUICK CURTAIN ON TABLEAU.*

Curtain is raised almost immediately for

TABLEAU SECOND.

Scene is the Same.

LADY D. *is on her knees by Lounge on which her face is hid.* SIR ARTHUR *stands back of Lounge at the L. corner, one hand resting upon its back.*

LADY D. See! I am at your feet, humbled and broken in spirit. In the name of common justice hear me,—let me—

SIR ARTHUR. Silence! Henceforth we must be strangers. If one so lost to shame needs consolation let it be in the fact that I do not curse you for the disgrace you have brought upon me! (*crosses.*)

LADY D. (*rising and extending her hands appealingly.*) Oh, Arthur, be merciful! It was for your sake alone,—to save you, as Heaven is my witness!

SIR ARTHUR. (*turning on her.*) For my sake! How dare you put it upon me when you know I would rather have died of starvation in the streets than lived to learn your shame! I wonder my brain has borne even the thought of it without driving me mad!

LADY D. (*falling on her knees at his feet.*) Spare me, for the love of Heaven! I cannot endure this!

SIR ARTHUR. (*standing over her.*) Spare you? Did you spare me

* The painting should be carefully done. Face should be portrait of Actress who plays the part. All of the figure should be covered by the "Godiva's flowing locks" except the bust and feet, and over all should be painted gauze drapery. Great care should be taken to avoid all suggestiveness or indecency. To accomplish the effect intended the picture should, in fact, be a work of Art.

when you sold my race to shame? when you forgot that which is dearer to me than life—my honor? Do you think I can ever look upon the face of my fellow-man again as I did before? Even now I can see them pointing the finger of scorn at me,—I can hear them saying: “See! there goes the man whose wife sold her charms to a painter of naked heroines,” worse than a common woman of the town!

LADY D. (*rising quickly and facing him.*) Stop! I have suffered too much already, I have humbled myself in the dust, but this I will not endure! I have been to you a true and loving wife. To save a life without which my own would have been worthless, I have sacrificed myself as no woman ever sacrificed herself before. You cannot know, you cannot imagine the bitter pang that sacrifice involved, — the nights of wild agony, the shame, the horror—which will haunt me to the grave, that I suffered for you! Let it pass. But for the honor of my sex, standing here alone and defenseless, I repel your foul imputation with utter scorn and I challenge you to repeat it—if you dare!

SIR ARTHUR. Enough of this! (*Turns to go.*)

LADY D. Stay! you *shall* hear me!

SIR ARTHUR. Be quick then. The sooner this is over the better. (*Sits in arm-chair. She stands back of table.*)

LADY D. You have heard my shame—you have not heard my miserable story. You thought the wretched pittance we had saved was sufficient to maintain us during your illness. It was not. Despite all I could do, despite semi-starvation on my part, it was gone before you were ill two months.

SIR ARTHUR. Why—why did you not tell me?

LADY D. Because worry would have killed you, and I wanted to save you. So I strove, as never before woman has striven, to wear a cheerful face while my heart—my heart was breaking. Often while you slept I walked the streets at night in search of any employment, no matter what, that might enable me to provide you with some little luxury. Even then I respected your injunctions and never begged from a living soul, though my heart was heavy and my broken spirit was sorely—God knows how sorely!—tempted.

SIR ARTHUR. I cannot listen to this. (*Attempts to rise. She pushes him back into seat.*)

LADY D. You must! The sorest temptation came upon me at a time when I was almost mad. The Doctor told me that unless you were immediately removed from the smoke and fog of London you would die,—you, my life, my all! And that man who has disclosed my secret

to day, came to our wretched place, which he owned, and after insulting me with a vile proposal, threatened to turn us into the street if he was not paid at once!

SIR ARTHUR. Oh, but he shall pay for this!

LADY D. Then came the temptation. I fought with it, I struggled with it till my blood froze and my brain was on fire. Your life hung upon my resolve. Had there been one friend near to whom I could have appealed, in that extreme moment I would have disobeyed you and made the appeal. But there was not one—not one! I was alone—utterly alone in the heart of a great, pitiless City! Oh, the terror and the desolation of it! I knew that the money my sacrifice would earn would save you. I forgo myself, I forgot everything save that you were dying before my eyes, and it seemed as if Heaven had opened me an avenue of relief. And so—so, with a heart of lead and a body of ice, I went, as Martyr never went before, to my terrible sacrifice. And I would have done it if the doing had periled my soul! (*Crosses and sinks on Lounge in a paroxysm of sobs.*)

SIR ARTHUR. Enough—enough! (*Rises.*) The life you have saved is worthless with such a stain as you have put upon it. I would rather have died ten thousand deaths of torture, than that you should have made my name a thing of scorn! (*Enter Val. and Blanche from behind Curtain quietly and unseen by them.*) I can pity you—I cannot,—no never,—forgive you!

LADY D. (*rising quickly.*) I do not want your pity when your love has gone. And dear as you are to me still, I cannot again ask for mercy of one who sets the opinion of a cold, merciless world above the love that lives through all eternity! (*Turns and sees Blanche.*) Blanche! (*Throws herself on Blanche's bosom. Blanche embraces her.*)

VAL. (*Stopping Sir Arthur who is going up to exit R. U. E.*) Arthur, don't make a fool of yourself.

SIR ARTHUR. You mean well, but you do not know what you are doing. Let me pass.

BLANCHE. Pardon me, but we will do nothing of the kind,—not, at least, until you hear what I have to say. We have been eavesdroppers, I confess it. We have heard what has passed between you and your wife.

SIR ARTHUR. You cannot defend her.

BLANCHE. I can do more; I can give her a closer place in my affection than she ever had. I can—

SIR ARTHUR. Without intending to be rude, I must decline to listen

to anything further. I cannot argue with you. The only course I can adopt is to take my leave.

BLANCHE. Not until you have heard a woman's opinion of the cowardly course you are pursuing. It is hard for me to believe that any man could be guilty of the base desertion of a wife who has made such a sacrifice for his sake.

LADY D. Oh, Blanche, Blanche, do not upbraid him!

BLANCHE. Be quiet dear; I mean to have my say.

SIR ARTHUR. As a woman, Mrs. Poindestre, you cannot appreciate what, under such circumstances, a man must feel.

VAL. One man, at least, indorses her opinion. I do!

SIR ARTHUR. Ah, it will be the same story, no doubt, everywhere. But if you—

LADY D. (*releasing herself from Blanche's arms and facing him.*) Enough! Go! but remember this: much as I have loved you, dearly as I love you now and always will, I can never forget what has passed to-day,—I can never forgive you, I never *will* forgive you till, when you have lived to repent this day, you come to me on your knees asking for pardon for the cruel wrong you have done me! Mr. Poindestre, let him pass! (*Val. moves aside.*)

SIR ARTHUR. (*going to R. U. E.*) Farewell! (*Exits.*)

LADY D. (*as the door closes.*) Gone! Arthur, my love, my husband! O God! (*Falls into Chair by Table, burying her face in her hands, and sobbing. Blanche rushes to and bends over her; Val. stands back of Table. Picture.*)

END OF ACT III.



ACT IV.

(ONE YEAR LATER.)

FORGIVEN !

SCENE:

Drawing Room at Chiswick Villa tastefully furnished—Windows R. and L. at back, and large Bay Window C. back, through which the Garden is seen—A Cradle with Infant in it near Bay Window—Sofa up Stage R.—Handsome Writing Table with two Chairs R. and one L. of it, half-way up Stage L.

Lady Deverell discovered by Cradle rocking it, Susan on the other side by Window. As Curtain rises Lady D. sings Lullaby "Rock-a-by, Baby." After Song goes to Writing Table and commences writing, while Susan goes to Cradle and bends over it.

SUSAN. Pootsey wosey, you pretty little dear! Was you sayin' Mamma wouldn't come hand talk to 'oo? Do stop writing, my lady; you're wearin' your heyes hand your 'art hout cryin'. What's the use thinkin' hand worryin' over what his past?

LADY D. I cannot help it, Susan. If I had not been guilty of an act which drove him from me—

SUSAN. Now, please dont be 'arping on an old story 'E would go away to Haustrialia hand 'e went hand got shipwrecked; hand as the hold Minister says, for you to be a forever grievin' over 'is loss when you have this 'ere little hangel to think hof, is a findin' fault with Providence. You saved 'is life once, but you couldn't go on doin' it forever.

LADY D. (*aside.*) Oh, Arthur! Arthur! if I could only have seen you once more; if you could only have lived to have forgiven me! (*Wipes her eyes with handkerchief and resumes writing.*)

SUSAN. (*aside to baby.*) There! you little darlin'! The honly thing

nurse 'as against you his that you look so much like your father. (*A knock heard.*) Shall I hopen the door, my lady?

LADY D. (*stopping writing.*) Yes. (*Susan goes to door R. and opens it. Enter Blanche and Val. Lady D rises and greets them.*) Ah, Blanche,—Mr. Poindestre,—I'm so glad to see you.

BLANCHE. And how is baby?

SUSAN. (*at cradle—excitedly*) There! I knew hit! There's a tooth comin'! (*Lady D. and Blanche rush to cradle.*)

LADY D. and BLANCHE. (*together.*) Where is it? Let me see!

BLANCHE. Oh, my, it's true! The baby's cutting a tooth. Come, Val. and look.

VAL. (*going to them.*) I beg your pardon, my dear; the tooth's cutting the baby!

BLANCHE. Oh, you horrid man! you dont know anything about babies anyhow.

VAL. I'm waiting for you to teach me something, my dear.

BLANCHE. (*boxing his ears.*) Val, I'm ashamed of you!

VAL. That's nothing; I'm ashamed of myself.

SUSAN. There now! 'e's goin' to cry! I must take 'im hand put 'im to sleep. (*Takes baby in her arms and exits R. U. E.*)

LADY D. Wont you be seated? (*They seat themselves, Lady D. by table, Blanche next to her and Val on other side of table.*)

BLANCHE. My dear Kate, I'm going to ask you something that, perhaps, sounds very strange. Has it ever crossed your mind that some day there might be a chance of your boy recovering the Deverell estates?

LADY D. (*rising*) I—I dont understand you. (*Suddenly.*) You—you have some news for me!

VAL. (*going to her.*) My dear Lady Deverell, pray be seated and dont get excited. Blanche has simply expressed an idea that somehow I have always entertained.

LADY D. Pray do not trifle with me. Next to the loss of—of—my husband comes my sorrow for the future of my boy. Sometimes I dream I see him grown to manhood, living in the old home and adding lustre to an ancient name by a generous and noble use of his wealth; and then—then I awake to the bitter reality that the inheritance which should have been his is lost to him forever.

BLANCHE. (*putting her arms around her neck.*) My dear Kate, do not misjudge us. I had a motive in asking the question. Some circumstances have come strangely to light that may yet bring for you a boy the future you desire.

LADY D. Oh, Heaven ! is it possible ?

VAL. My wife says so—and I am too wise a husband to contradict her.

LADY D. For pity's sake do not keep me in suspense. What is it you have heard ?

BLANCHE. Come here. (*Takes her to sofa R.*) Now sit down by me—so. (*They sit.*) Now give me your hand and promise to listen quietly. (*Val sits by table.*)

LADY D. Yes, yes—go on !

BLANCHE. I hardly know how to commence. You see, Val has a great friend who went to Australia, and we've just received a letter from him in which he says he had a strange meeting with the man who caused all your troubles—Percival Keith.

LADY D. Percival Keith ! Is it possible ?

BLANCHE. More than possible—its true. Val, suppose you tell the rest ?

VAL. Oh no ; I always let my wife finish when she starts—its good policy.

BLANCHE. (*smiling.*) You see I've trained him well. Well, Val's friend was making an excursion into the bush when he came to a house which had been robbed by thieves and its owner stabbed and left for dead. He wasn't dead, but dying. He seemed to have something on his mind, and on being told his end was near, made a full confession of his crimes. That man was Keith.

LADY D. (*after a pause.*) But my boy—how does this affect him ?

BLANCHE. Because Keith confessed that he and Bulfinch had robbed and swindled Sir Arthur.

LADY D. (*rising.*) At last ! I always suspected it !

BLANCHE. (*rising and taking her hands.*) Between them they had concocted a scheme to ruin Sir Arthur. Many fictitious deeds were drawn, some of which Sir Arthurs really signed, but the signatures to the most important were forged by Bulfinch himself !

LADY D. Yes, yes—what else ?

VAL. (*rising.*) Keith was involved and had to leave the country. Bulfinch knew it and used pressure, promising to send him five thousand pounds after he, as supposed mortgagee, got possession of the estates. So Keith fled and Bulfinch, from time to time, has been sending him barely enough to keep him alive.

LADY D. And now he is dead—dead ! And the truth cannot be proven.

BLANCHE. Oh, yes it can, or we wouldn't have said anything about

it. Keith gave Val's friend papers and letters in Bulfinch's writing which would convict him a dozen times—wouldn't they, Val?

VAL. A dozen? There's no need to limit the number. And besides there's a dying confession attested by witnesses along with the other papers in my friend's pocket.

LADY D. (*turning to him eagerly.*) And your friend—when will he be here?

VAL. Be seated while I calculate it. You are weak. (*Lady D. sits by table; Blanche sits on sofa.*) You see, the letter somehow miscarried and has been a long time coming. He said he would leave on the 10th and—let me see,—yes—he ought to be here now.

LADY D. Justice—justice at last, thank God! Oh, if he had only lived to know this. (*Val has gone to Blanche and is whispering something to her. Lady D. rising suddenly.*) You are keeping something back from me!

BLANCHE. (*rising and going to her.*) Dear, I fear to tell you—you are not strong; the shock—

LADY D. (*falling on her knees.*) Tell me,—for pity's sake tell me. Is it of—him?

BLANCHE. Yes!

LADY D. (*rising—in a whisper.*) Is—is he alive?

VAL. (*rising.*) Yes—and coming here!

LADY D. Thank God! Thank God! (*sinks into chair.*)

BLANCHE. (*bending over her.*) Quick, Val, she has fainted! (*He goes to her.*)

LADY D. (*recovering.*) No,—no,—the shock—I was a little weak; but I am strong now. (*After a pause.*) Then—then he was saved from the wreck?

VAL. He was cast upon a desert island,—the only soul of all who were on the doomed steamer to be saved. From there, after months of suffering, he was rescued by a vessel blown out of her course by a hurricane, and taken to Australia.

LADY D. And your friend—your friend—

VAL. Is Sir Arthur himself!

LADY D. (*dropping her head on table.*) Oh, Arthur! Arthur!

BLANCHE. There! I'm afraid we've been too abrupt. Please calm yourself.

VAL. Yes, you must; because I want a promise.

LADY D. (*looking up.*) What is it?

VAL. That you will not say a word of this to a living soul until I

give you permission. Dont ask me any questions,—I have my reasons. Will you promise?

LADY D. (*after a pause—extending her hand which he takes.*) Yes.

Enter SUSAN R. U. E.

SUSAN. Miss Hantique hand Mr. Halbert. (*They enter. Exit Susan.*)

MISS AN. (*coming down.*) My dear Lady Deverell, good morning. And Mrs. Poindestre! (*They exchange greetings.*)

ALBERT. (*who has gone to Val.; aside to him.*) My dear boy, look out for me, wont you? The old girl's going for me heavier than ever to day, and I'm afraid every hour I'll be a goner! (*Val laughs.*)

MISS AN. We were just going by and I thought I'd drop in and show you a new photograph Henry and I have had taken to,ether. You have them in your pocket, Henry.

ALBERT. Ye-s, ye-s. (*To Val.*) Its no use, its Fate—I'm a goner, old boy — let me go! (*Going to her and feeling in his pockets.*) Which—which pocket did I put them in, old girl! Did—(*accidentally steps on her foot.*)

MISS AN. (*screaming.*) Oh! oh! You've killed me!

ALBERT. (*confusedly.*) I beg pardon. — beg pardon old girl. Here.—take this! (*Takes a small bottle from his pocket.*)

BLANCHE. Why, what's that? (*Lady D. has led Miss Antique to sofa limping, and seated her. Sits by her.*)

ALBERT. Cure for corns! Excellent thing! My own invention. Lemon juice in there—pearl shirt buttons dissolved in it,—cures corns in no time! (*Going to Miss Antique.*) Here, old girl, (*kneeling,*) let me try it on you! (*They are all smothering laughter.*)

MISS AN. (*indignantly.*) Henry!

ALBERT. (*rising*) No, no, of course not! I mean try it on yourself,—of course,—of course. (*aside*) Hang me if I want to! (*Blanche and Val. are together by table.*)

Enter SUSAN R. U. E.

SUSAN. My lady, can I see you a moment, please.

LADY D. (*rising.*) Excuse me. (*Goes to her.*) What is it?

SUSAN. Mr. Bulfinch his 'ere!

LADY D. He! What does this mean? Mr. Poindestre—please. (*Poindestre goes to her.*) Mr. Bulfinch is here!

VAL. What! The very man I've been hunting for all morning!

LADY D. What shall I do?

VAL. See him—see him by all means. I know it is painful, but

oblige me and see him,—do not breathe a word of what you know, and keep him here as long as you can!

LADY D. If—if I must!

VAL. Blanche!

BLANCHE. Yes, dear. (*Goes to him. He whispers to her. She comes down to sofa where Miss Antique has been sitting resting her head on Albert's shoulder and holding one of his hands while with the other he has been rubbing her forehead.*) Excuse me; but would you mind taking a stroll in the garden with me a few minutes?

ALBERT. (*jumping up and almost falling back through Miss Antique's holding on to his hand.*) Certainly not,—certainly not.

MISS AN. (*rising.*) Henry, your arm. (*Takes his arm.*)

ALBERT. (*aside.*) Its no use,—old girl's bound to have me and I'm booked! Anyhow, she's got money—that's a consolation.

BLANCHE. This way, please. (*To the others*) We'll return in a few minutes (*Exite R. followed by them.*)

VAL. Now, Lady Deverell, please follow my instructions. Be brave and all will be well. Can I depend upon you?

LADY D. (*giving her hand.*) Yes.

VAL. Then for the present, *au revoir*. Now Susan, show Mr. Bulfinch up. (*Exits R.*)

SUSAN. Show 'im hup! 'e ought to 'ave been shown hup long ago! (*Exits R. U. E.*)

LADY D. I feel like one in a delightful dream who fears to wake lest the airy visions of his sleep should vanish into nothingness! Oh, can it be true that happiness is coming to me once again! My heart is beating with mingled joy and fear, and my brain feels in a whirl. (*exits R.*)

Enter SUSAN, R. U. E.

SUSAN. Well, well, hif I hever! The brass of that Bulfinch his honly hequalled by 'is wickedness. Hif Tom catches 'im 'ere, there'll be a row sure as my name's Susan. (*Sitting on chair by table.*) Talking of Tom I wonder when 'e's ha agoin' to come to the point with me. 'E's slow - no mistake. (*Enter Tom R.*) Ah! Tom his that you?

TOM. (*going to her.*) It is, wootsey!

SUSAN. I was just a thinkin' habout you.

TOM. (*sitting on arm of chair and putting his arm around her.*) Susan, you could not employ your time more profitably. What was you thinking?

SUSAN. I was a wonderin' whether you were hever goin' to finish

what you started sayin' to me the hother day. I'm willing to join hands hand travel with you.

TOM. Your confidence touches me deeply—here. (*Points to his heart.*) But we'd have to travel on our shape, and I'm afraid we wouldn't get far.

SUSAN. (*rising.*) I've money hin the Bank han'l so 'ave you!

TOM. (*holding her off at arm's length.*) Susan, I have heretofore remarked that you have a great head. If you had had a different father and mother you might have been Queen of England—you actually might. And the way you combine love with finance is truly touching.

SUSAN. I know you're worth a 'undred pounds hat least, hand with what I've got we can live nice hand 'igh. What do you say?

TOM. Come to my arms! (*Pulls her suddenly to him so that she falls into his arms.*) Since you are so anxious, Susan, its a go! We can certainly live high enough with our wealth; in fact, my dear, we can live away up in the attic.

SUSAN (*nestling on his breast.*) Oh, Tom!

TOM. You needn't hide your face. Susan, if it isn't the prettiest in the worl'l, there's none more honest. And that's better! And if you want to be Mrs. Tom, yours truly is with you.

SUSAN. Oh, Tom, I ham so 'appy!

TOM. And, Susan, we'll die as rich as anybody e'se

SUSAN. (*crossing.*) Why, Tom, what do you mean?

TOM. We'll leave the entire world behind us, wont we? And I guess that's about as much as anybody else can do! But never mind, Susan, we'll do the best we can and take our chances on the rest. Come to my arms once more and seal the bargain! (*Opens his arms, she rushes to him, he embraces and kisses her.*) Um! that's good!

Enter Lady Deverell R.

LADY D. Susan!

TOM. (*aside.*) Caught in the act, by jingo! (*Susan rushes to table and confusedly dusts it with her apron, while Tom runs off R.*)

LADY D. Susan, where is Mr. Bulfinch?

SUSAN. Beg pardon, my lady; I forgot hall habout 'im. I'll send 'im right hup! (*Exits R. U. E.*)

LADY D. The old, old story—the same in the kitchen as in the parlor. Ah, me! (*Goes to table and sits.*) And now for Mr. Bulfinch.

Enter BULFINCH, R. U. E.

BULF. Lady Deverell!

LADY D. (*without looking at him*) Be seated.

BULF. (*sitting on lounge aside.*) How beautiful she is! I have tried to keep away from her. I have struggled to crush the only passion I have ever known in my life, but it is too strong for me. (*aloud.*) You are no doubt surprised by my visit, Lady Deverell?

LADY D. I am.

BULF. It is a long time since we last met and it has taken some courage for me to come here. I need not—I need not refer to painful subjects nor attempt to explain my past conduct which, no doubt—of course, I know it has,—has prejudiced me in your eyes; but what I have done was not my fault,—it was forced upon me by circumstances!

LADY D. Indeed!

BULF. Yes.—one must defend himself. For one occasion I can make no excuse except—except that my love and passion were too much for me.

LADY D. (*aside.*) Love and passion! He classes them together as if Vice and Virtue were the same thing.

BULF. I need not specify that occasion?

LADY D. (*sharply.*) No! I have not forgotten it.

BULF. I have not ventured to intrude my presence upon you since—since that day at Miss Antique's. I wanted to come when I heard of your loss, but I feared that you still thought—rightly, rightly, of course,—too hard of me. But now—now that you have had time to become—reconciled—in a measure, in a measure, I mean—I thought that perhaps in looking back you might have found some—some palliation for me, and—and—

LADY D. (*aside.*) How long must I endure his hateful presence? (*aloud—after a pause.*) Well?

BULF. And so I have dared at last to come and apologise, and ask if it is not possible for us to be friends.

LADY D. Is that all?

BULF. (*rising.*) No; I thought, perhaps, the time had now come when I might refer to something touching the future welfare of your child.

LADY D. (*rising and leaning on table.*) Of my child? And how—how can you influence his future?

BULF. (*aside.*) Hem! I have scored a point. (*Aloud.*) By a series of misfortunes your son has been deprived of his ancestors' estates; and it is hard that the—we'll say mistakes—of others should be visited upon so young and innocent a head. I—I want to say that under certain conditions he may yet inherit the patrimony which is justly his due.

LADY D. What do you mean ?

BULF. I surprise you. of course—quite natural. I know you dont give me credit for the possession of a single good feeling or impulse. All the same, my Lady, it is my honest wish that all ill-feeling between us should be cast aside and that your child should eventually possess the estates I have referred to—under certain conditions.

LADY D. (*sitting—aside.*) He has heard ! He think I am ignorant and hopes to make a compromise through me. Never ! (*aloud.*) Well—and the conditions are—

BULF. Did I say conditions ? I meant *condition*.

LADY D. Be good enough to state it.

BULF. (*approaching her.*) I will. I want to say, though that I dont ask you to accept it now or to give me any answer ; I only make it as a suggestion for you to— to think over at your leisure. I give you your own time.

LADY D. (*after a pause.*) I am listening patiently.

BULF. Hem ! The condition is that you will, —not now, of course,—even a year will do,—become my wife !

LADY D. (*springing up.*) How dare you insult me with such a vile proposition !

BULF. (*astonished.*) Hem ! I said my *wife*. What's wrong about that ? You seem to mistake me.

LADY D. I did mistake you in imagining for an instant that you would make any restitution to my child of the estates of which you robbed his father. For the proposition you have dared to make no words can express my loathing !

BULF. (*crossing to behind her.*) Very well. I intended to do you a great service ; but since you prefer my enmity I will show you that it is in my power to injure you still ! By Jove, Madame you ought to know that I am not a man to be trifled with !

LADY D. Your threat only increases my contempt for you. Rather than listen to your proposal I would beg my bread from door to door !

BULF. Fine words for one who drove her husband to exile and death by—

Enter SIR ARTHUR hurriedly R. U. E. He is followed by VAL. and DETECTIVE in plain clothes.

SIR ARTHUR. Liar ! I am alive ! (*Rushes to Lady D.*)

LADY D. Arthur ! (*Falls into his arms.*)

SIR ARTHUR. (*embracing her.*) Darling ! Do not speak.

VAL. (*to Bulf.—who has turned to go.*) Hold on, Mr. Bulfinch. Dont be in a hurry. My friend here wants your company. He's what is called a detective.

BULF. I dont understand you. Let me pass !

VAL. Not yet. I piesume you know Percival Keith's signature. (*Showing document*) Do you recognize it ?

BULF. Damnation ! What does this mean ?

DETECTIVE. (*throwing open his coat and showing badge and taking him by the arm.*) It means that you're wanted for forgery and a few other things.

BULF. This is a vile conspiracy ! Let me go !

DETECTIVE. Not a bit of it. And you may as well come quietly because I have assistance below and a pair of nippers in my pocket. Come along !

BULF. Curse you all ! (*Detective exits with him R. U. E.*)

VAL. (*at door.*) I say, Bulfinch, if ever you get out of jail, come to me and I'll see you're taken back again. (*Exits R. U. E.*)

LADY D. And have you really come back to me ?

SIR ARTHUR. Yes, darling ; come to ask your forgiveness for the cruel wrong I did you ; come, never to leave you in life again ; come to protect you from evil tongues and evil men forevermore See ! on my knees I ask your pardon. (*kneels.*)

LADY D. (*raising him.*) Rise, Arthur, —do not kneel to me.

SIR ARTHUR. (*embracing her.*) I see now, clearer than I ever saw before, there is a Providence rules over us ; and even when Its decrees seem most cruel and hard to bear they are most wise. Had you not sut for that picture, I should never have recovered my possessions. The very act for which I condemned you most cruelly has been the means of detecting a villian and restoring us to the dear old home !

LADY D. And am I quite forgiven ?

SIR ARTHUR. Forgiven ! Ah, Kate. the pride of the Deverells dwindled to a very small thing when I was alone on that desert island of the Indian Sea. The scales fell from my eyes and I learned to contrast your noble self-sacrifice with my own miserable selfishness.

Enter VAL and BLANCHE, R. ALBERT and MISS ANTIQUE, L.

SUSAN, R. U. E.

LADY D. Oh, Arthur ! Let us forget the past, remembering only the lesson it teaches. That misnamed pride which feeds the sneers and

scoffs of an unthinking world, is false and foolish ; that is true pride which, conscious of its rectitude, dares brave criticism and is not deterred by the dread of the multitude's censure. And that love is the only true love for which no sacrifice without dishonor is too great !

POSITIONS AT FALL OF CURTAIN :

SUSAN.

VAL *and* BLANCHE.

ALBERT *and* MISS AN.

SIR AR. *and* LADY D.

R.

C.

L.

CURTAIN.









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